

KITAABUS

SAUM

THE BOOK OF FASTING



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INTRODUCTION

“O People of Imaan! Siyaam (fasting) has been ordained for you just as it was ordained for those before you so that you attain Taqwa!” (Qur’an)

Siyaam is among the fundamental acts of Ibaadat. It has been ordained by Allah Ta’ala for the development of taqwa (piety) in the Mu’mineen. Fasting is extremely efficacious for the acquisition of taqwa. A Muslim cannot acquire Divine Proximity without taqwa. Without taqwa, the Muslim must necessarily drift far off the straight Path (Seeratul Mustaqeem) which leads to Allah Ta’ala and everlasting success in the Aakhirah.

One who denies the fardhiyat (obligation) of Saum, no longer remains a Muslim and the one who does not fast during the month of Ramadhaan is a Faasiq (an immoral and flagrant transgressor) of the highest order. Such a Faasiq totally destroys his spirituality and morality and exposes his Imaan to the gravest onslaughts of kufr.

There are numerous benefits, both spiritual and physical, of fasting. The prime benefit in the pursuit of taqwa is the suppression of the inordinate desires and demands of nafs-e-ammaarah (man’s base carnal propensity). The nafs is perpetually in collusion with Shaitaan to spiritually and morally ruin the Mu’min. If the nafs is allowed unrestrained freedom, it will succeed to make man the slave of passion, lust and base emotions. His Imaan will suffer. The Noor of his Imaan will be

extinguished. It is, therefore, essential that the nafs is put in fetters. Fasting greatly aids in this direction.

By fasting, the Muslim learns to restrain his lowly desires. The nafs is not allowed free expression. The nafs becomes accustomed to submit to the Shariah's restrictions. Carnal desires are weakened and the ability of inculcating taqwa is created.

Fasting produces purity in the rooh (soul). For such purity to come into the rooh, spiritual authorities (the Auliya) say, there is nothing that has greater efficacy than fasting. While fasting results in even physical health, it creates a feeling of palpable spiritual purity in the Mu'min. The door of Roohaaniyat (the spiritual domain) is opened up by fasting.

Fasting creates pleasure in Ibaadat. It also makes the heart more conducive for Ibaadat. The bond with Allah Ta'ala is strengthened and the Mu'min acquires a greater awareness of his spiritual and moral goals for which he has been created.

By fasting, the Mu'min progressively draws nearer to Allah Ta'ala. Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) supplicated:

"O Rabbul Alameen! When does the servant become closest to you?"

The Divine Reply came:

"When the servant is hungry and when he is in Sajdah."

The development of lofty, angelic attributes are engendered in the Mu'min by fasting. In fasting, man brings about in him a resemblance with the angels since the latter do not eat. They are

devoid of evil inclinations and all things base. Man by reducing his worldly relations and by increasingly stripping his nafs of emotional desires, moves closer to the angelic domain. Thikrullah is the nourishment of the angels. By increasing his Thikrullah, especially in the state of fasting, the Muslim enters the realm of Divine Proximity.

Fasting engenders a feeling for the poor. Man becomes more conscious of his less fortunate brethren and their hardships. He thus learns the lesson of sacrificing some of his wealth to aid others in need. He inculcates in him feeling for humanity.

The greatest and highest benefits of fasting are the acquisition of Allah's Pleasure and lofty ranks in the Aakhirah.

In a Hadith-e-Qudsi, Allah Ta'ala says:

“Saum is for Me. I shall (personally) apportion out the reward for it.”

For the acquisition of the numerous benefits of Siyaam, there is, however, one vital condition, viz.: abstention from sin and futility.

Sin and futility negate the beneficial effects of fasting. It is therefore essential for the Saa-im (the fasting person) to exercise utmost care and abstain from sin and all things of futility. Should the Saa-im not be heedful of this important condition, his mere abstention from food and water will be akin to a chained animal which is denied food. Spiritually such abstention from food and drink is of no value. The Muslim should therefore understand well the purpose of Saum and transform his abstention from food into a higher and spiritual act of Ibaadat for the achievement of all the lofty benefits by

abstaining from sin, futility and all such things, acts, attitudes and thoughts which neutralise and nullify the efficacy of Saum. In addition to the adoption of the moral principles for gaining the spiritual and moral effects of Saum, it is essential to adopt all the fiqh (juristic) rules necessary for the validity of Saum. Without these rules the Saum is rendered utterly worthless and at times totally invalid. This book explains these important and necessary rules.

**Mujlisul Ulama of South Africa
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KITAABUS SAUM (THE BOOK OF FASTING)

DEFINITION

Saum (fasting) is abstention from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse during the day whilst having made niyyat (intention) of Saum. The fasting day commences with Subah Saadiq (Fajr Thani) and ends at sunset.

CATEGORIES OF SAUM

There are two categories of Saum, viz.,

- (1) Waajib
- (2) Nafl

(1) WAAJIB CATEGORY

The word ‘Waajib’ here means ‘essential’ or ‘necessary’. It does not refer to the technical meaning of the Fiqhi term, Waajib.

The category of Waajib Saum includes all forms of compulsory fasts – both Fardh and Waajib. The Waajib category is subdivided into two classes of Saum, viz.,

- (a) Saum related to time
- (b) Saum which devolves upon one as an obligation

(a) SAUM RELATED TO TIME

This type of Saum comes into effect when the occasion or time for its observance arrives.

This type of Saum comprises:

The Saum of Ramadhaan

The Saum of Nathrul Muayyan

Nathrul Muayyan refers to a vow in which it was stipulated that a particular day/s will be fasted upon materialisation of one's wish or dua.

NIYYAT FOR THIS FIRST WAAJIB CATEGORY

It is preferable to make the Niyyat for this Waajib category of Saum during the night, i.e. prior to the entry of Subah Saadiq when the fast starts. If the Niyyat was not made during the night, the Saum will be valid if the Niyyat is made approximately one hour before Zawwaal. One hour before Zawwaal is an approximate time as a precautionary measure. The exact time limit for the validity of the Niyyat for Saum is before the time of **Nisfun-Nahaar**, i.e. midday in terms of the Shariah.

Nisfun-Nahaar is determined by dividing by two the time duration from Subah Saadiq to sunset, and adding the result to Subah Saadiq time.

Example:

Subah Saadiq 5:30 a.m.

Sunset 5:35 p.m.

Time duration from Subah Saadiq to Sunset:

12 hrs. 5 mins divided by 2 = 6 hrs. 2 mins. Add this result to Subah Saadiq: 5:30 + 6:02 = 11:32 a.m. = Nisfun Nahaar.

If Niyyat is made for the Saum before 11:32 a.m. (in this example), the Waajib-Saum will be valid.

It is not essential that any particular Niyyat formula be recited. Niyyat merely means to intend that one will be fasting, or is fasting. The Niyyat could also be made verbally in any language, e.g. one may say: ‘*O Allah! Tomorrow I shall be fasting for You*’.

Or one may recite in Arabic e.g.:

اللَّهُمَّ أَصُومُ غَدًا لَكَ فَاعْفِرْ لِي مَا قَدَّمْتُ وَمَا أَخَّرْتُ

I make Niyyat of tomorrows fast, therefore forgive my future and past sins.

Remaining without food and drink the whole day will not render such abstention a Saum if no Niyyat was made.

During the month of Ramadhaan only Niyyat of the existing Ramadhaan’s Saum will be valid. Even if a Niyyat for any other Saum is made during Ramadhaan, then too only the Saum of the existing Ramadhaan will be discharged and not the Saum for which Niyyat was made.

(b) SAUM WHICH DEVOLVES AS AN OBLIGATION

This is the second category of Waajib Saum (stated earlier). Examples of Saum in this category are:

- (i) Qadhaa of Ramadhaan
- (ii) Nathrul Mutlaq which is a vow made to fast any number of days without stipulating any particular day or date in the vow
- (iii) Kaffaaraat
- (iv) Saum of Zihaar

NIYYAT FOR THIS SECOND CATEGORY OF WAAJIB SAUM

This type of fast will be valid only if niyyat was made during the night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq. If niyyat for this type of Saum was made after Subah Saadiq, then the Waajib Saum of this category will not be discharged, and the Saum thus kept will be a Nafil fast.

(2) NAFL CATEGORY

(1) All classes of Nafil Saum are valid with a niyyat made prior to Nisfun-Nahaar. It is preferable to make the niyyat at night; however, as said, it will be valid even if not made at night. The Sunnat fasts also fall in the Nafil category.

(2) Thus, for Saum belonging to the first category of Waajib (see page 9) and for Nafil Saum, a niyyat made prior to Nisfun-Nahaar will suffice.

(3) Once a Nafil Saum has been commenced, it is incumbent to complete it.

(4) It is not permissible to nullify a Nafil fast without valid reason.

(5) If a Nafil fast is broken, it is obligatory to make Qadhaa of it.

(6) A Mutlaq (i.e. without any descriptive condition) niyyat suffices for the validity of Nafil Saum. Thus, the niyyat '*I shall be fasting*' suffices.

(7) A niyyat made for Nafil Saum during the night may be cancelled before Subah Saadiq, and Qadhaa for the intended Nafil Saum will not be obligatory.

(8) A niyyat made for Nafl Saum after Subah Saadiq, but before Nisfun-Nahaar, makes the fast incumbent. If the fast is broken, Qadhaa becomes obligatory.

(9) It is permissible to end a Nafl Saum to honour one's guests by participating in meals with them. The Saum thus broken should be made Qadhaa.

(10) When the husband is present, it is not permissible for the wife to engage in Nafl Saum without his consent. If she kept a Nafl Saum without his consent, it will be permissible for her to break it if he instructs her to do so. She has to make Qadhaa of the fast whenever her husband gives her the permission to do so.

(11) The incidence of haidh (menses) during a Nafl fast will necessitate Qadhaa. If during the day when a woman is keeping a Nafl fast she menstruates, the Saum will be broken. Qadhaa of the day is necessary.

(12) A Qadhaa fast was commenced. However, niyyat for the Qadhaa was not made during the night as is required by the Shariah. The niyyat was made only after Subah Saadiq. The Qadhaa is not valid. However, this fast will be a Nafl one. The fast should not be broken. If it is broken, Qadhaa will have to be made.

THE MASNOON SAUM

The Masnoon (Sunnat) fasts are all classified in the Nafl category (see page 12). The following are the Sunnat fasts for which the Shariah promises great Thawaab (reward):

(1) The 10th of Muharram – the Day of Aashura. Along with the 10th, either the 9th or the 11th should also be kept.

(2) The 9th of Zil-Hajj.

(3) The 15th of Sha'baan.

- (4) Six days during the month of Shawwal. These six Saum may be kept consecutively (in succession) or spread over the month.
- (5) The 13th, 14th and 15th of every Islamic month.
- (6) Every Monday and Thursday.
- (7) The first nine days of Zil-Hajj.

SAHRI

Sahri is the act of arising from sleep during the course of the night to partake of some food or drink in anticipation of the next day's fasting.

1. Sahri is Sunnat regardless of whether one feels like eating anything or not. One should rise and eat even a date or two or merely take a gulp of water.
2. It is of greater merit to delay Sahri. But it should not be delayed so much that Subah Saadiq has almost set in, causing doubt in the validity of the fast.
3. It is not permissible to forgo a fast because of failure to wake up during the night for Sahri.
4. It is not permissible to eat after the expiry of Sahri time. Sahri time expires with the commencement of Subah Saadiq.
5. Some people continue eating even while the Fajr Athaan is being proclaimed. This act breaks the fast since the Athaan is proclaimed after expiry of Sahri time.
6. While the best method of observing Sahri is in the later part of the night after rising from sleep, the Sahri will be valid if for some reason one remained awake until late in the night and then partook of Sahri before going to sleep.
7. Eating by error after the ending of Sahri time necessitates QADHAA of the fast. If one ate under the mistaken impression that it was still Sahri time, the fast of the following day will not

be valid. However, it is Waajib (compulsory) to abstain from all acts which break Saum and to remain like a Saa-im (a fasting person). Qadhaa of the fast will have to be made after Ramadhaan.

8. A doubt in the ending of Sahri time will not invalidate the fast although it is Makrooh (a sinful act) to eat when there is a doubt as to the existence of Sahri time. But Qadhaa will not be compulsory. Nevertheless, in view of the doubt, it will be better to make Qadhaa of such a fast.

9. It is Mustahab to delay Sahri as late as possible, but not to the Makrooh time, i.e. when one starts doubting the validity of Sahri time.

10. Some Ramadhaan timetables indicate a recommended time for the cessation of eating, etc. at the time of Sahri. It is not obligatory to stop eating at such recommended times. One is allowed to eat right until the ending of Sahri time which coincides with Subah Saadiq although it is best to stop eating a couple of minutes before Subah Saadiq.

11. If Sahri was missed due to having overslept, one should not forgo fasting. It is not permissible to refrain from Saum because of having missed Sahri.

SAUM IN ABNORMAL TIME ZONES

In abnormal time zones where the sun either does not rise or set for months, the times of the nearest normal region should be taken for beginning and ending the Saum.

IFTAAR

(1) It is Mustahab to hasten with Iftaar (breaking the fast) as soon as the sun has set.

(2) Iftaar should be made before the Maghrib Salaat.

- (3) The Muath-thin should make Iftaar before proclaiming the Athaan.
- (4) At the time of Iftaar, it is Sunnat to recite the following dua:

أَفْطَرْتُ رِزْقَكَ وَعَلَى تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ أَمَنْتُ وَبِكَ صُمْتُ لَكَ اللَّهُمَّ

“O Allah! I have fasted for You. I believe in You. I have trust in You, and I make Iftaar with the (Rizq) food provided by You.”

- (5) Iftaar should preferably be made with dates. In the absence of dates, water is best. Although this is best, it is permissible to break the fast with any lawful food or drink.
- (6) It is Makrooh to make Iftaar when in doubt regarding sunset. If it is overcast, Iftaar should be delayed until there is absolute certainty that the sun has set.
- (7) If Iftaar is made even a minute before sunset, Qadhaa of the fast is incumbent.
- (8) It is Makrooh to unnecessarily delay Iftaar.
- (9) The time of Iftaar is very auspicious. Dua is readily accepted at the time when the fast is about to end.

THE SAUM OF RAMADHAAN

- (1) The Saum of Ramadhan is Fardh. One who denies the fardhiyat (being Fardh) of the Saum of Ramadhan becomes a kaafir while one who accepts its fardhiyat but neglects its observance is described as a Faasiq.
- (2) The Saum of Ramadhan commences when the sighting of the Ramadhan Hilaal (crescent moon) has been confirmed in accordance with the rules of the Shariah. Niyyat for the Saum of Ramadhan should be renewed each day. A single niyyat at the beginning of Ramadhan will not suffice for the Saum of the entire month. Partaking of the Sahri meal will be an

adequate niyyat for the validity of the Saum. While it is better to recite a verbal niyyat as well, the mere act of rising from sleep to participate in Sahri with the intention of fasting constitutes the actual niyyat.

(3) The Saum of Ramadhan belongs to the first class of Waajib fasting (see 1 (a) on [page 9](#)). Therefore, the niyyat for the Ramadhan fasting will be valid until Nisfun-Nahaar ([see page 10](#)). However, there is greater merit in making the niyyat at night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq.

(4) A mutlaq (i.e. without any descriptive condition) niyyat will suffice for the Saum of Ramadhan. Thus, it is not incumbent to say: *'I am fasting the Saum of Ramadhan or Fardh Saum'*. It will suffice to intend that one is just fasting.

(5) During the month of Ramadhan only the Saum of the prevalent Ramadhan can be kept. No other Saum is valid in the month of Ramadhan. Thus, previous Qadhaa fasts, Kaffarah fasts, Nafl fasts etc. are not discharged during the month of Ramadhan.

Even if the niyyat of other Saum is made during Ramadhan, such niyyat will not be valid and only the Saum of the existing Ramadhan will be discharged. By the niyyat not being valid here, means that in regard to other fasts, the niyyat will not operate. In terms of the Shariah this niyyat, although made for other Saum, will operate as valid for only the Saum of the existing Ramadhan.

(6) If on account of a reason accepted as valid by the Shariah, one does not fast during Ramadhan, one should not eat in the presence of others.

(7) If one's Saum is nullified by error, e.g. water slips down the throat while rinsing the mouth, one should remain the whole day as a fasting person although Qadhaa is incumbent. It will be sinful to indulge in eating once the fast is erroneously broken.

(8) If haidh begins during the course of the fasting day, the fast is not valid. It is not incumbent to abstain from eating during the remaining part of the day. However, she should not eat in the presence of others.

(9) A woman whose haidh ends during the course of the day (i.e. during Ramadhan) should compulsorily abstain from eating, etc. Her fast on the particular day her haidh ended is not valid, hence she has to make Qadhaa in spite of having to refrain from eating, etc. on that day.

(10) A fast of Ramadhan broken deliberately without valid reason, after having made the niyyat for fasting during the night, brings about the penalty of Kaffarah (see page 18 for Kaffarah).

(11) A musaafir is permitted to refrain from Saum although it is meritorious for him/her to fast if the journey is not a difficult one. However, the Shariah allows a musaafir to refrain from fasting during Ramadhan even if he/she encounters no difficulty on the journey. The musaafir will make Qadhaa of all Saum omitted during the journey.

(12) A musaafir ceases to be a musaafir on returning to his hometown or on forming a niyyat of staying fifteen days or more at any place along the journey. The non-musaafir is termed a muqem. When a musaafir becomes a muqem, he has to compulsorily abstain from eating, etc. If he becomes a muqem prior to Nisfun-Nahaar (see page 10), and he has yet not committed any act which nullifies Saum, then his niyyat for the day's fast will be valid. However, if he has already eaten, etc. prior to becoming a muqem, then although his fast will now not be valid, nevertheless, he has to compulsorily abstain from eating, etc. for the rest of the day. In addition, he has to make Qadhaa of that day.

(13) A muqem (one who is not a musaafir) who has started fasting and then goes on a journey, should continue with the

fast. It is not permissible for this person who has become a musaafir to break the fast.

(14) A musaafir who returns home (becomes a muqeeem) and dies before having obtained a sufficient number of days to make Qadhaa of the fasts which he/she missed while on the journey, is liable for the Qadhaa of only the number of days he/she remained alive and capable of fasting.

Example: The musaafir did not fast for 20 days. On returning home, he/she died after 12 days but did not make any Qadhaa in spite of having had the opportunity to do so, he/she is, therefore, liable for only 12 days of Qadhaa, not for 20 days which were missed while on the journey. He/she has thus to make wasiyyat (a bequest) for the payment of Fidyah for the Saum which could no longer be discharged. (This rule will be further discussed on [page 33](#).)

(15) The same rule, viz. 14. will apply to a sick person who regained health after Ramadhaan, but did not live a sufficient number of days to discharge all the Saum missed.

(16) If a musaafir dies along the journey or the sick person dies without having regained sufficient health to fast, the Saum is waived. They are not required to make wasiyyat for payment of Fidyah. (Fidyah is explained on [page 32](#).)

(17) When a pregnant woman has a genuine fear for either her own life or the life of the child she is bearing; it will be permissible for her to refrain from Saum. She will have to make Qadhaa of the Saum she misses as a result. Should she break her Saum during the course of the day, i.e. after having started it, the penalty of Kaffaarah does not apply to her. She is liable for only Qadhaa. She cannot compensate the missed fasts with Fidyah as long as she has the ability to fast, Qadhaa is necessary.

Fear in this context will mean a genuine fear supported by either previous experience or by the advice of a pious Muslim

physician. The word of a kaafir doctor or of a Muslim Faasiq doctor is not valid grounds for her to break her fast nor to abstain from fasting.

(18) If a mother who breastfeeds her baby genuinely fears for her baby if she fasts – that the baby will suffer by her milk drying up during the fast, then it will be permissible for her to refrain from fasting. She has to make Qadhaa of the missed fasts. She too cannot compensate the omitted fasts by means of Fidyah.

(19) A very old person who is truly unable to fast, is permitted to refrain from Saum. He/she has to offer compensation by means of paying the Fidyah ([see page 32](#)).

(20) When a child (a na-baaligh – one who has not attained the age of puberty) becomes baaligh during the course of the day in Ramadhaan, he/she has to compulsorily refrain from eating for the rest of that day although there is no Qadhaa for that day.

(21) When a non-Muslim embraces Islam during the course of the day in Ramadhaan, he/she has to refrain from eating for the rest of the day although there is no Qadhaa for that day.

(22) If the child mentioned in mas'alah 20 and the Muslim mentioned in mas'alah 21, eats during that particular day, there will be no Kaffaarah on them although their action of eating is sinful.

(23) The Saum of a person who becomes unconscious after having commenced the fast, remains valid as long as medicine was not administered to him/her via his/her mouth.

(24) A person who lapsed into unconsciousness before having made niyyat for Saum during the night or before Nisfun-Nahaar, will make Qadhaa of that day, i.e. if he/she had no intention of fasting that day.

(25) A person lapsed into unconsciousness before the commencement of Ramadhaan, and remained in this state the

entire month. After regaining consciousness, Qadhaa of the whole month is obligatory.

(26) When a person lapses into unconsciousness on the first night of Ramadhan, and remains in this state the entire month or for a number of days, then Qadhaa of the first day is not obligatory. Qadhaa of all the subsequent days – viz. the days after the day when unconsciousness started, is compulsory.

(27) If a person becomes insane prior to Ramadhan, and the insanity endures until after Ramadhan, the Saum of the whole of Ramadhan is waived even if sanity is regained.

(28) An insane person who regains sanity during Ramadhan has to make Qadhaa of the fasts missed during the duration of insanity.

(29) If a non-Muslim embraces Islam during Ramadhan and learns of the obligation of fasting only after Ramadhan, then Qadhaa is not compulsory on him.

(30) When a child reaches the age of seven years, he/she should be ordered to observe Saum. However, there is no Qadhaa if the child breaks the fast. By the age of ten, the child should be compelled to keep the Ramadhan fasts. This is the normal rule. Parents should use their discretion and introduce their children to Saum according to their health and strength.

NATHR SAUM

Nathr is a vow or pledge made to Allah Ta'ala. Nathr Saum is a pledge to fast. A person may make a vow that if a certain dua or wish is granted, a certain number of days will be fasted. On the materialisation of the dua/wish, fulfilment of the vow becomes Waajib (compulsory).

(1) Nathr Saum is of two kinds: 1. Nathr Mu-ayyan and 2. Nathr Ghair Mu-ayyan or Nathr Mutlaq.

Nathr Mu-ayyan is a vow in which the pledge is made to fast on specific days, etc. it is pledged: *“O Allah! If my dua is fulfilled, I shall fast next Thursday, Friday and Saturday”*.

On fulfilment of the dua, it becomes Waajib to fast on the specific days mentioned in the vow.

(2) Nathr Mu-ayyan belongs to the first category of Saum, viz. the Waajib category (see page 9).

(3) Niyyat for Nathr Mu-ayyan will be valid until Nisfun-Nahaar.

Nathr Ghair Mu-ayyan or Nathr Mutlaq is a vow in which specific days are not set aside for Saum. The number of days to be fasted is declared, but the intention is not to fast on any particular days, e.g. a person vows: *“O Allah! If a certain dua of mine is fulfilled, I shall fast three days”*. Or someone merely assumes the liability of fasting a number of days without conditioning the fast with fulfilment of a dua, e.g. one says: *“O Allah! I shall fast two days”*.

(4) The Saum of Nathr Mutlaq may be kept at any time. One is not required to keep such Saum immediately although it is best to discharge the obligation as soon as possible since no one knows when maut (death) will overtake one.

(5) For the validity of the Saum of Nathr Mutlaq, it is essential to make niyyat before Subah Saadiq. If niyyat for this type of fasting is made after Subah Saadiq, the Saum of the Nathr will not be discharged and the fast thus kept will be a Nafl one. The fast of the Nathr will have to be discharged on another day with a niyyat made before Subah Saadiq.

(6) When the method of executing the fasts is not stipulated in the vow, it will be permissible to discharge the Saum of the Nathr in any way one pleases, whether consecutively or interspersingly.

Example: A vow is made to keep 10 fasts. When the vow was made one did not have any intention of keeping the fasts one

after the other (i.e. consecutively) nor of keeping the fasts spread over a period (i.e. interspersingly). In this case, one has the choice of executing the Saum consecutively or interspersingly.

(7) When the intention is to keep the Saum of the Nathr consecutively, then it will be obligatory to do so.

(8) When failing to observe the consecutive order (as mentioned in mas'alah 7), the Saum will have to be kept all over again, e.g. the intention at the time of the vow was to fast three consecutive days. However, after fasting two days, one failed to observe fast on the third day or haidh started. The Saum will have to be started over again.

(9) If on account of severe weather conditions, e.g. extreme heat, one is unable to execute the Saum of Nathr on its specific days, it will be permissible to postpone the fasting for the winter months. The Qadhaa will be valid.

(10) If the Nathr of Saum is attached to a condition, the fast will be validly executed only after the coming into effect of the condition.

Example: *"I shall fast three days if a certain event occurs"*. Now, if one fasts before the event transpires, the Saum of the Nathr will not be discharged. After the occurrence of the event, the fasts will have to be repeated.

(11) Unfulfilled Saum of Nathr must be compensated by Fidyah, i.e. when death overtakes one, wasiyyat to pay Fidyah has to be compulsorily made.

Example: A man vows to fast one month. Before being able to complete the month's fasting, he is overtaken by severe illness and he loses hope in life. It now becomes obligatory on him to make a bequest (wasiyyat) to enable his heirs to pay the Fidyah of the unfulfilled number of days of his Nathr.

(12) A vow of fasting made during the state of illness will become binding only if one gains sufficient health to fast. Thus,

if a man during his illness vows to fast for a number of days but dies before recovering from that illness, he is under no obligation to make wasiyyat for the payment of Fidyah for the Saum he was unable to execute. Fidyah is not Waajib on him. However, if he recovers from his illness for even one day, the full number of days of his vow becomes obligatory on him. If he thereafter again lapses into sickness and loses hope in life, he has to make wasiyyat for the payment of Fidyah.

KAFFAARAH OF RAMADHAAN

Kaffaarah is the penalty which is imposed by the Shariah for the deliberate and flagrant nullification of the Saum of Ramadhan.

- (1) Kaffaarah applies to only the Saum of Ramadhan.
- (2) Kaffaarah comes into force only if the niyyat for fasting was made at night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq. Thus, if niyyat was made during the night to fast the following day, and then the fast is broken without a valid reason, the Kaffaarah penalty comes into effect.
- (3) Kaffaarah for flagrantly breaking a fast of Ramadhan is to fast 60 consecutive days – sixty days, one after the other, without missing any day in between.
- (4) Since Kaffaarah Saum belongs to the second class of the Waajib category of Saum (see page 9), it is essential to make niyyat for this type of fasting from the night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq. If the niyyat is not made before Subah Saadiq, the Kaffaarah will not be valid.
- (5) The Kaffaarah will be rendered invalid if for any reason – be it a valid reason – even a single day is omitted during the 60 day Kaffaarah course. Thus, if a person fasted for 59 days and failed to fast on the sixtieth day due to illness, he will have to start the Kaffaarah all over again. The only interruption which

will not invalidate the Kaffaarah is haidh (the monthly menses of women).

(6) A Kaffaarah interrupted by the intervention of nifaas will be rendered invalid.

(7) A person who is unable to discharge the Kaffaarah because of ill-health or very old age, will have to feed 60 poor persons. Each miskeen (poor person) should be given two full meals for the day or the amount in cash which is given as Sadqah Fitr. This amount is the price of approximately 2 kilograms' bread flour. Instead of cash, flour may also be given.

(8) If the grain, food or cash of 60 persons is given to one man on a single day, the Kaffaarah will not be discharged. It will be regarded as an amount/quantity given to only one person.

If the entire Kaffaarah amount/quantity is distributed on a single day to only two persons, the Kaffaarah will not be discharged thereby. Another 58 persons will have to be given each the Sadqah Fitr amount.

(9) The Kaffaarah option of feeding 60 Masaakeen (poor persons) may be discharged on a single day by feeding 60 persons or giving the cash or grain to sixty persons.

(10) The Kaffaarah may also be spread over a period of 60 days. Daily, one miskeen may be fed or given the grain/cash until 60 days.

(11) If after having paid the Kaffaarah one recovers from the illness and is able to execute the 60 day fast, then fasting 60 days becomes obligatory. The money, etc. previously given to the poor will become a Nafl charity.

(12) If any miskeen among the sixty is a small child, the Kaffaarah will not be discharged. If small children were fed, an equal number of adults will have to be fed in lieu. However, if the full Sadqah Fitr amount was given in cash to a poor child, the Kaffaarah will be fulfilled.

(13) Where the Kaffaarah option of feeding or payment is valid, another person may pay it on the instruction of the one who is liable for the Kaffaarah. Without such instruction it will not be valid.

(14) Where the Kaffaarah option of feeding or payment is valid, an interruption during the course of feeding or paying will not invalidate the Kaffaarah. Thus, if a person who is unable to fast the 60 days, undertakes to feed one miskeen for 60 days, but does not feed the miskeen for 60 consecutive days, the Kaffaarah will be valid. As long as the miskeen is fed for 60 days, the Kaffaarah will be valid even if the 60 days are spread over a long period.

(15) A single Ramadhaan makes Waajib only one Kaffaarah irrespective of the number of fasts flagrantly broken during that Ramadhaan.

(16) If fasts were flagrantly nullified in more than one Ramadhaan, the number of Kaffaarah will be equal to the number of Ramadhaan. Thus, if fasts were flagrantly broken in three different Ramadhaans, three different Kaffaarah will be obligatory.

(17) When the Kaffaarah is commenced on the 1st day of the Islamic month, then fasting two full Islamic months will suffice for the Kaffaarah even if the total number of days in the two months are 58 days (29 day months).

If, however, the Kaffaarah is started during the course of the month, then it will be necessary to fast a full 60 days.

THINGS WHICH BREAK THE FAST

- (1) Eating or drinking breaks the Saum.
- (2) Sexual intercourse even if there is no emergence of semen.
- (3) Smoking.

- (4) Inhaling smoke by one's own action, e.g. inhaling the smoke of incense, etc.
- (5) Application of medication into the anus.
- (6) Swallowing any substance or object which is not normally consumed as food or medicine, e.g. pebbles, paper, a coin, etc.
- (7) Pouring oil into the ears.
- (8) Saliva mingled with blood will break the fast if the taste of blood is discernible when Swallowing.
- (9) Eating deliberately after having eaten mistakenly. (Eating by mistake does not break the fast.)
- (10) Water slipping down the throat while making wudhu even if not done deliberately.
- (11) Deliberately inducing oneself to vomit will break the fast if the vomit is a mouthful. If the emergence of the vomit cannot be restrained, the vomit will be said to be a mouthful. Vomiting less than a mouthful will not break the fast even if deliberately induced.
- (12) A food particle the size of a chana (about the size of half a pea) becoming unstuck from the teeth and slipping down the throat.
- (13) Applying drops of medicine into the nostrils.
- (14) Masturbation. In addition to it nullifying the Saum, it is an immoral and a sinful act. The perpetrator has been cursed by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).
- (15) Medical tests undertaken by women in which any instrument, etc. is internally inserted.
- (16) Ejaculation as a result of caressing and fondling the wife even if there was no sexual intercourse.

THINGS WHICH DO NOT BREAK THE FAST

- (1) Eating, drinking or indulging in sexual relations forgetfully. This means that at the time of committing these acts, one does not remember the fast. However, if one continues even momentarily after recalling the fast, the Saum will be nullified.
- (2) Applying eye-drops.
- (3) Water entering the ears.
- (4) Vomiting, no matter how much. This refers to vomiting which is not self-induced. For the rule regarding self-induced vomiting, see above no. 11.
- (5) Smoke, which is inhaled unintentionally, not by one's volition or conscious action.
- (6) Applying surmah into the eyes.
- (7) Smelling anything fragrant provided that there are no vapours.
- (8) A food particle less than the size of a chana becoming unstuck from the teeth and slipping down the throat.
- (9) Swallowing saliva and slime.
- (10) Injection. The injection of medicine into the body will not break the fast provided that the medicine does not reach the brain or the stomach.
- (11) Blood in the saliva will not break the fast if the blood is less than the saliva. This fact will be recognised if the taste of the blood is not discerned.
- (12) Using a miswaak to clean the teeth even if the miswaak is fresh and has a taste.
- (13) Breastfeeding the baby.
- (14) If during wudhu water slips down the throat while one does not remember the Saum, the fast will not break.
- (15) Ejaculation of semen during sleep.
- (16) Ejaculation caused by imagination.

(17) Janaabat or the state of Hadath-e-Akbar which is purified by ghusl. If one has not taken ghusl and Sahri time ends, the fast is valid.

THINGS WHICH DO NOT BREAK THE FAST, BUT WHICH ARE MAKROOH DURING SAUM

Some things, while not breaking the fast, are nevertheless Makrooh to do during fasting. Makrooh means detestable and in this context Makrooh things are sinful. Makrooh things bring about a decrease in the Thawaab of the Saum. It is, therefore, essential to abstain from committing Makrooh acts. The following acts are Makrooh during fasting:

(1) Tasting. Tasting food, etc. is Makrooh if done unnecessarily.

If an ill-tempered husband shows his unjustified wrath when food has not been prepared to satisfy his taste, it will be permissible for the wife to taste the food while she is preparing it. As long as nothing goes down her throat, her fast will be valid and her act of tasting will not be Makrooh.

(2) Using powder or paste to clean the teeth. If any of these substances slips down the throat, the Saum is nullified.

(3) Caressing, fondling or kissing the wife. If ejaculation does not occur, the Saum will be valid.

(4) To rinse the mouth at times other than when making wudhu.

(5) To put water in the nose at times other than when making wudhu.

(6) To take ghusl merely for cooling.

(7) To swim.

(8) To unnecessarily apply ointment to the lips. If, however, due to pain caused by cracked lips, ointment is applied, care should be taken to prevent licking the ointment.

- (9) To unnecessarily chew something to soften it, **for example**
- (10) To eat when in doubt as regards the existence of Sahri time. If later it transpires that Sahri time had in fact expired, Qadhaa will be obligatory.
- (11) To make Iftaar (i.e. to break the fast) when in doubt as to the time of sunset. If it transpires that the time when Iftaar was made the sun had not yet set, Qadhaa will be obligatory.
- (12) Participating in un-Islamic activities such as watching television and playing games such as chess, draughts, monopoly, etc. The Thawaab of the Saum is destroyed by indulgence in such unlawful activities.
- (13) Gheebat or backbiting.
- (14) To gargle the mouth when making wudhu.

QADHAA SAUM

Qadhaa means to fulfil or to compensate fasts which were not executed when they were due.

- (1) It is necessary to make Qadhaa of Saum as soon as possible since one does not know when death will overtake one. While it is not Waajib to make the Qadhaa immediately after Ramadhaan or on any other specific day/s, Qadhaa should not be unnecessarily delayed.
- (2) Qadhaa Saum belongs to the second class of Waajib fasting (**see page 9**). For the validity of Qadhaa Saum, it is essential to make niyyat during the night, i.e. before Subah Saadiq.
- (3) Saum omitted on account of haidh and nifaas has to be made Qadhaa.
- (4) It is not necessary to specify in one's niyyat for Qadhaa the particular day/s which were omitted. It will suffice to merely intend that: *"I am keeping Qadhaa fast"*. However, if the Saum missed belongs to more than one Ramadhaan, then it will be

essential to specify in one's niyyat for Qadhaa the year, e.g. *"I am making Qadhaa of the Saum of Ramadhaan of the year 1409."* etc.

(5) It is not obligatory to keep the Qadhaa Saum all at once (consecutively). The Qadhaa Saum may be spread over a period or they may be kept consecutively.

(6) Saum which is broken in any way whatsoever, deliberately or erroneously, voluntarily or under compulsion, has to be made Qadhaa.

(7) Qadhaa has also to be made of Nafl fasts which were broken.

(8) Qadhaa has also to be made of Nathr Mu-ayyan fasts (see section on Nathr Saum) which were not executed on their specific days.

(9) If by the time death approaches, the Qadhaa has not yet been discharged, it will then be obligatory to make a wasiyyat (bequest) for payment of Fidyah ([see page 32](#)).

(10) Similarly, if due to old age or sickness one is unable to fast and the Qadhaa has not yet been executed, wasiyyat to pay Fidyah will be Waajib (obligatory).

THINGS WHICH MAKE PERMISSIBLE THE BREAKING OF SAUM

Breaking Saum becomes permissible only in case of a real need, emergency or danger. When a fast is broken on account of a valid reason, Qadhaa of the fast is obligatory. In such cases only Qadhaa is necessary, not Kaffaarah.

The following are valid reasons which make permissible the breaking of Saum:

- (1) Sudden sickness which endangers one's life, or which will cause great deterioration of health if the fast is not broken.
- (2) When it becomes necessary to take medicine due to having been bitten by a poisonous animal.
- (3) Extreme thirst which endangers one's life.
- (4) A pregnant woman having genuine fear for either her own safety or the safety of the child she is bearing, may break the fast.
- (5) A woman fearing for the life of the baby she is breastfeeding may break the fast. If her milk dries up as a result of the fast and the baby is dependent on breastfeeding, breaking the Saum is permissible.
- (6) A Nafl fast may be broken to honour one's guests. Qadhaa of the fast has to be made.

FIDYAH

Fidyah is the compensation which has to be paid for the Saum which has not been executed on account of permanent disability, etc.

- (1) The Fidyah amount for each compulsory fast not kept is the same as Sadqah Fitr, viz. 2kg bread flour or its cash equivalent or feeding a miskeen (poor person) two full meals for a day.
- (2) Unlike Kaffaarah, it is permissible to distribute the Fidyah amount among several Masaakeen (poor persons).
- (3) Fidyah (as well as Kaffaarah) money/food can be given to only such Muslims who are allowed to accept Zakaat.
- (4) If by the time maut (death) approaches, one has not yet paid the Fidyah, it will be Waajib to make a wasiyyat (bequest) for the Fidyah to be paid.
- (5) A person who is allowed to pay Fidyah for undischarged Saum, on recovering his health after having paid the Fidyah, is

obliged to fast the number of days he had missed. The Fidyah thus paid will become a Nafl charity.

WASIYYAT

Wasiyyat is a bequest which a person has to make with regard to undischarged Saum.

(1) If by the time of the approach of maut (death) a person has not executed his obligation of Qadhaa Saum or Fidyah, it will be Waajib (obligatory) on him/her to make a wasiyyat, declaring that Fidyah for the undischarged Saum obligation be paid on his/her behalf.

(2) Once the mayyit (deceased) has made a wasiyyat, it will be Waajib on the executors/heirs of the mayyit's estate to pay the Fidyah from the estate of the deceased, i.e. from one third of the estate.

(3) If the Fidyah amount exceeds one third of the estate, payment of the excess from the mayyit's estate is not permissible. However, if all the adult heirs willingly consent to the payment of the full Fidyah (i.e. including the excess), it will be permissible. The consent of minors is not valid, hence the excess (i.e. more than one third the value of the estate) cannot be paid from the shares of the minor heirs.

THINGS WHICH PERMIT ABSTENTION FROM SAUM

The following things permit one to refrain from fasting:

(1) Extreme old age which renders a person decrepit.

(2) Sickness – if there is danger to life or if the fast will cause the sickness to deteriorate, it will be permissible to abstain from Saum.

- (3) Pregnancy – if the health or life of the mother or child is threatened.
- (4) Breastfeeding – if the baby is dependent thereon and if the Saum causes the milk to dry out.
- (5) Journey – a musaafir (one who has undertaken a journey of 48 Islamic miles or more) is permitted to abstain from fasting. Forty-eight Islamic miles equal 88 kilometres.
- (6) Haidh (menses) – the Saum of a woman in the state of haidh is not valid. She has to make Qadhaa after Ramadhaan.
- (7) Nifaas (post-natal blood) – the Saum of a woman in the state of nifaas is not valid. She has to make Qadhaa after having attained tahaarah (purification – when nifaas ends).

THE DAYS WHEN IT IS FORBIDDEN TO FAST

There are five days during the year on which it is forbidden to fast. These five days are:

The two days of Eid and the three days of Tashreek viz. 11th, 12th and 13th Zil-Hajj (The three days following Eid-ul-Adhaa). Fasting on these days is not valid.

YAUMUSH SHAKK (THE DOUBTFUL DAY)

- (1) The day after the 29th of Sha'baan is termed Yaumush Shakk or the Doubtful Day because of the possibility of that day being the 30th of Sha'baan or the 1st of Ramadhaan.
- (2) It is Makrooh to fast on Yaumush Shakk whether it is a Nafl, Qadhaa or Nathr Saum.
- (3) If one's usual day of Nafl fasting coincides with Yaumush Shakk, it will then not be Makrooh to fast on that day, e.g. it is one's usual practice to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. Should

Yaumush Shakk coincide with Monday or Thursday and one makes the firm intention of Nafl fast, then it will not be Makrooh. Should it be confirmed later that the day is in fact the first day of Ramadhan, the fast thus kept will be regarded as the Fardh Saum of Ramadhan even though the niyyat was for Nafl.

(4) It is Makrooh Tahrimi (which is a forbidden and sinful act) to fast on this day (Yaumush Shakk) with the niyyat of Ramadhan or some other compulsory Saum such as Qadhaa or Nathr. Nevertheless, if it transpires that the day is in fact the first day of Ramadhan, then this fast will be regarded as the Saum of Ramadhan.

(5) It will be afdhal (best) for a person whose usual day of Nafl Saum coincides with Yaumush Shakk to fast on that day (viz. Yaumush Shakk).

(6) On the Day of Doubt, people should abstain from eating until Nisfun-Nahaar (about one hour before Zawwaal). If by this time news confirming the sighting of the moon is received, they should make the niyyat for Ramadhan Saum. If by Nisfun-Nahaar such confirmation is not received, they should eat, for then it is not Ramadhan.

MISCELLANEOUS MASAA-IL

(1) Saumul Wisaal is Makrooh. Saumul Wisaal is to fast the whole year including the forbidden days.

Saumul Wisaal according to another authoritative version also means fasting continuously – day after day – throughout the year except on the forbidden days.

(2) The best method of Nafl fasting is to fast every alternate day. However, due to the physical weakness of most people in

this age, Auliya advise abstention from abundance of Nafl Saum.

(3) When fasting on the Day of Aashura (10th Muharram), it is Sunnat to add another day. Therefore, one should fast on either the 9th and 10th or the 10th and 11th Muharram.

(4) Saumus Samt is Makrooh. Saumus Samt means a fast in which abstention is not only from eating, drinking and sexual relations, but also from speaking. Saumus Samt literally means a fast of silence.

(5) If the husband himself is fasting, he is not entitled to prevent his wife from Nafl fasting. Thus, when he is fasting she does not require his consent for Nafl fasting.

(6) If fasting interferes with the diligence of a worker, it will be makrooh for him to engage in Nafl Saum without the consent of his employer.

(7) When one is permitted to abstain from a Saum during Ramadhaan due to a valid reason, one should not eat publicly.

(8) If it is seen that an aged or a feeble person eats forgetfully during Ramadhaan, it is permissible to refrain from reminding him of the fast. However, if he is strong enough to complete the fast without difficulty, then it will be incumbent to remind him of the Saum.

THE VIRTUES, SIGNIFICANCE AND REWARDS OF SAUM

(1) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“He who fasts solely for the sake of Allah Ta’ala, his previous sins are all forgiven.”

(2) *“The odour of the mouth of a Saa-im (fasting person) is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk.”*

(3) It is narrated in the Hadith that on the Day of Qiyaamah, even before Reckoning has taken place, the fasting people will be sumptuously fed under the shade of Allah's Arsh (Throne) while others will be still embroiled in the hardships of Reckoning.

(4) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"The sleep of a Saa-im is Ibaadat and his silence is Tasbeeh (recitation of Subhaanallah); the Thawaab of his deeds is considerably increased; his dua is accepted and his sins are forgiven."

(5) *"Saum is a shield and a powerful fort to save one from Jahannam."*

(6) According to the Hadith, fasting is a shield as long as the Saa-im does not rupture it with lies and backbiting (gheebat). Although the fast will be discharged, the Thawaab and efficacy of the Saum are destroyed by the commission of sin.

(7) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the Saa-im has been promised by Allah Ta'ala that at the time of Iftaar (at least) one of his duas will most certainly be accepted.

(8) The person who gives a Saa-im something with which to break his fast, will receive the Thawaab of the fast while nothing will be reduced of the Saa-im's fast. This Thawaab will apply even if some water is presented with which to break fast. (Hadith)

(9) On the first night of Ramadhaan, the Doors of Heaven are opened up and all Doors remain open until the end of Ramadhaan. (Hadith)

(10) Every raka't of Salaat performed during the nights of Ramadhaan gains for the Saa-im the Thawaab of one and half thousand good deeds. In addition, special mansions will be constructed in Jannat for this person. (Hadith)

(11) On the first night of Ramadhaan, the sins committed since the previous Ramadhaan until now are forgiven. (Hadith)

(12) During Ramadhan, 70, 000 Malaa-ikah daily make Dua of Maghfirah (forgiveness) on behalf of the Saa-im, from the time of Subah Saadiq until sunset. (Hadith)

(13) Whoever engages in gheebat (backbiting) or consumes liquor during the month of Ramadhan, Allah Ta'ala will erase the good deeds which he had rendered throughout the year. (Hadith)

(14) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Every good deed of the son of Aadam (Alayhis salaam) is increased (in reward) from ten times to seven hundred times – and Allah Ta’ala said: ‘Except Saum, for verily, it (Saum) is for Me and I, Myself will reward it. The Saa-im abstains from desire and food for My sake’. For the Saa-im there are two (occasions of pleasure – pleasure at the time of breaking fast and pleasure at the time of meeting his Rabb.”

(15) Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Saum and the Qur’aan will intercede on behalf of the servant (of Allah). Saum will say: ‘My Rabb! I forbade him from food and desires during the day, therefore, accept my intercession on his behalf’. The Qur’aan will say: ‘I forbade him from sleep at night, therefore, accept my intercession on his behalf’. Thus, their intercession will be accepted.”

THE SIGHTING OF THE MOON

(1) The Islamic months, being lunar months, commence with the sighting (rooyat) of the crescent moon (Hilaal). The principle is the sighting of the Hilaal, not the birth of the moon.

(2) It is Waajib (obligatory) for the people to search for the Hilaal at the end of the 29th day of Sha’baan, i.e. at sunset.

(3) If the Hilaal is not sighted nor is reliable news of the sighting of another place received, the month of Sha'baan should then be completed with 30 days. This is the clear, straightforward and simple instruction of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). If this instruction is adhered to, all controversy usually associated with moon-sightings nowadays, will be eliminated.

Regarding the Hilaal and associated controversies, the Mujlisul Ulama has published a book: 'THE SIGHTING OF THE HILAAL'. Write for a copy to Y.M.M.A., P.O. Box 18594, Actonville 1506, South Africa.

There are many masaa-il (rules) related to the sighting of the Hilaal and its confirmation. However, since these rules are necessary for only those in positions of Islamic leadership (the Mufti, Imam, etc.), these will be omitted from this book.

(4) In the present time, people indulge in needless controversy regarding Ramadhaan and Eid. In some countries such as England, where the Hilaal cannot be sighted at the end of the 29th day due to perpetual overcast conditions, the desire is almost always to ignore the simple and clear instruction of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) viz. if the Hilaal is not sighted, the month should be completed with 30 days. The attitude adopted by people of such places conveys the impression that it is wrong to follow the example of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), hence attempts are made to obtain news of moon sightings from nearby or even distant countries. In the process of receiving and accepting news and information of this kind, irregularities are committed. Many a time, the news is not regarded as reliable in Shar'i terms. The inhabitants of such countries will render themselves a favour should they opt for following Rasulullah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) advice in matters of sightings of the Hilaal. It does not matter at

all if every Islamic month is a thirty-day month on account of the Hilaal not being sighted at the end of the 29th day.

There is no need for the institution of elaborate, expensive and time-consuming measures for the purposes of confirming the sighting of the Hilaal. Simple Islamic practices of the Sunnah are inexpensive and do not give rise to controversy. The Sunnah method is simply to regard the month as a 30-day month if the Hilaal is not sighted at the end of the 29th day.

(5) Another act of deviation in regard to moon-sighting is the introduction of the baseless principle of ‘Eid in conjunction with Makkah’. Some deviated people have of recent come up with this idea. However, in the Shariah there is no such principle as ‘Eid in conjunction with Makkah’. If the sighting is not confirmed according to Shar’i rules, the month will not commence regardless of the month having been started in Makkah Muazzamah. The Shariah does not require all regions of the world to follow Makkah Muazzamah in regard to moon-sighting.

Write for our book: ‘ANSWER TO AL AZHAR’S FATWA’, to the YOUNG MEN’S MUSLIM ASSOCIATION P.O. Box 18594, Actonville 1506 (Benoni, South Africa).

WAAJIB (COMPULSORY) SAUM

Besides the Saum of Ramadhaan, there are other compulsory Saum as well. These are briefly discussed hereunder.

(1) Saum as Kaffaarah for Qasam

When a Qasam (oath) has been violated, one of the options of expiation is to fast three consecutive days. On having fasted three days – one after the other – one is absolved of the sin of having violated the oath.

(2) Saum as Kaffaarah for killing

When a person has been accidentally killed, the killer has to fast sixty consecutive days in addition to the Diyat which he has to pay to the heirs of the killed person.

(3) Saum of Zihaar

When a person utters to his wife, 'You are for me like the back of my mother' or any other similar statement, the wife becomes unlawful to her husband until he has executed the Saum of Zihaar which consists of fasting sixty consecutive days.

(4) Saum of Hajj-e-Tamattu'

When the Mutamatti' is not by the means to sacrifice his/her Dam-e-Tamattu' (the animal which a Mutamatti' has to compulsorily sacrifice), ten fasts become obligatory in lieu. Three fasts are to be observed in Makkah Muazzamah, the last of the three being on the Day of Arafah, and seven fasts are to be observed after returning home. It is not obligatory to keep these fasts in consecutive order.

(5) There are also some other obligatory fasts which have to be kept as penalties for certain violations of Ihraam. These will, Insha'Allah, be explained in Kitaabul Hajj.

MASAA-IL PERTAINING TO SAUM

(1) The Thawaab and spiritual benefits of Saum are eliminated by the commission of sin during the state of fasting.

(2) Fasting acts as a protecting shield for the Saa-im (fasting person) as long as he does not destroy his Saum with sin.

(3) Among the sins which destroy the benefits of Saum, the worst is gheebat (to speak ill of others in their absence). Gheebat also produces physical weakness during Saum. The fast thus becomes very difficult to observe.

(4) Indulgence in futile acts, nonsensical and idle conversation are also negatory of the benefits of Saum.

(5) While it is necessary to remember Allah Ta'ala at all times, the need for Thikrullah is greater during the fast. This greatly improves the spirituality of the fasting person and is very efficacious in bringing one closer to Allah Ta'ala.

(6) The dua of the fasting person is readily accepted by Allah Ta'ala, especially his dua at the time of Iftaar.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Everything has a gateway. The gateway of Ibaadat is fasting.”

Explaining the benefits of fasting, Imam Ghazaali (Rahmatullah alayh) says:

“Fasting overpowers Shaitaan, the enemy of Allah because the base of all carnal desires is the stomach. By filling the stomach, lust exhibits its actions. Shaitaan, by manipulating these carnal desires, targets man as his prey. When the Muslim adopts hunger by fasting and the lustful desires weaken in consequence, Shaitaan is beaten into defeat and despondency.”

“Ensure that the food with which you make Iftaar is Halaal without the slightest vestige of doubt. Do not eat so much that the body feels heavy. The aim of the fast is defeated in doing so.”

I'TIKAAF

I'tikaaf means to stay in the Musjid with the niyyat of I'tikaaf for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. The purpose of such stay in the Musjid is Ibaadat and to gain proximity to Allah Ta'ala.

THE TYPES OF I'TIKAAF

There are three types of I'tikaaf: Waajib, Sunnatul Muakkadah and Nafl.

WAAJIB I'TIKAAF

An I'tikaaf of Nathr and a Qadhaa I'tikaaf are Waajib (compulsory) I'tikaaf.

NATHR I'TIKAAF

(1) I'tikaaf of Nathr is an I'tikaaf undertaken as a result of a vow made to Allah Ta'ala.

(2) The validity of Nathr I'tikaaf requires the verbal expression of the niyyat or intention. It is, therefore, essential to verbally say, for example: *"I am undertaking (or making) I'tikaaf for Allah Ta'ala for three days"*, or any other similar statement in which it is declared that I'tikaaf has been undertaken or is presently being undertaken. The expression of an intention should not relate to the future, e.g. *"It is my intention to perform I'tikaaf"*, etc.

For the purpose of Nathr I'tikaaf only a niyyat in the mind/heart is not sufficient.

(3) Saum (fasting) is a condition for the validity of Nathr I'tikaaf. Nathr I'tikaaf without fasting is not valid even if one vows to observe I'tikaaf without fasting.

(4) There are two types of Nathr I'tikaaf: Nathr Mu-ayyan and Nathr Ghair Mu-ayyan.

Nathr Mu-ayyan I'tikaaf is an I'tikaaf, the observance of which, one vowed to keep on specific days, e.g. on the 13th, 14th and 15th of Muharram. If one failed to observe the I'tikaaf on the particular days stipulated in the niyyat, the I'tikaaf has to be discharged at another time, i.e. Qadhaa will have to be made of the I'tikaaf.

Nathr Ghair Mu-ayyan I'tikaaf is an I'tikaaf, the observance of which is not pledged for any specific day/s. One merely vows to observe I'tikaaf for two days (for example). Such an I'tikaaf may be executed at any time of one's choice.

(5) If in the niyyat the number of days is expressed in the plural, e.g. *"I shall observe I'tikaaf of two days (or three or four days etc.)"*, and no specific meaning was given to the word 'days', then the word 'days' will mean 24 hours. Thus, I'tikaaf of the days as well as the nights will be obligatory.

When expressing the niyyat, if the intention is to observe I'tikaaf only during the day and not during the night, only the days will become Waajib. If it is specified in the niyyat that I'tikaaf of only the nights will be observed, then such I'tikaaf is not obligatory.

(6) Similarly, if in the niyyat the term 'nights' was used, e.g. *"I have made obligatory on me an I'tikaaf of three nights"*, and by the term 'nights' no particular meaning was intended nor specified, then I'tikaaf of both the night and day will be Waajib.

(7) If the vow was for an I'tikaaf of one day only, then it will mean the day commencing from Subah Saadiq until sunset. However, if the intention was a 24 hour period, then 'one day' will mean from one sunset to another sunset, i.e. 24 hours – night and day.

(8) If the intention is to observe I'tikaaf of only one day (i.e. minus the night), one should enter the Musjid just prior to Subah Saadiq and leave at any time after sunset.

(9) If the intention is to observe I'tikaaf for 24 hours or for several days with nights included, one should enter the Musjid before sunset and leave at any time after sunset of the last day of the I'tikaaf.

(10) When Nathr (vow) is made to observe I'tikaaf for several days (i.e. days including nights 24 hour period), it will be Waajib to execute the days of the I'tikaaf consecutively – one after the other without interruption. However, if at the time of the niyyat it is specified that the I'tikaaf will be interspersed, then it will be permissible to spread the number of days of the Nathr I'tikaaf over a period. It will then not be Waajib to observe the I'tikaaf in consecutive order of days.

(11) In a Nathr I'tikaaf in which the nights have not been included in the niyyat, it will be permissible to intersperse the days of the I'tikaaf. Consecutive order in this case is not Waajib.

(12) A Nathr Mu-ayyan I'tikaaf (in which a specific month or particular days have been specified for the I'tikaaf) may be executed even before the specified period.

(13) If it is expressed in the vow that the Nathr I'tikaaf will be undertaken in Musjidul Haram, it will be permissible to observe it in any Musjid.

(14) Nathr I'tikaaf may be discharged even with the Saum of Ramadhaan. Thus, if a vow was taken to observe I'tikaaf during Ramadhaan (i.e. other than the I'tikaaf of the last 10 days), then such I'tikaaf will be valid and the fasting of Ramadhaan will suffice for the I'tikaaf.

(15) Nathr I'tikaaf will be valid with any type of Waajib fasting even if the Saum is Qadhaa or Kaffaarah fasting. Thus, if one is keeping Qadhaa fasts, one may observe a Nathr I'tikaaf on such days.

(16) Nathr I'tikaaf will not be valid with Nafl fasting. Thus, if one intends Nathr I'tikaaf after having commenced a Nafl Saum, the Nathr I'tikaaf will not be valid.

(17) The minimum period for a Waajib I'tikaaf is one day, i.e. from Subah Saadiq to sunset.

QADHAA OF I'TIKAAF

(1) Qadhaa will be made of Nathr and Masnoon I'tikaaf. There is no Qadhaa for Nafl I'tikaaf.

(2) Qadhaa of Nathr Mu-ayyan I'tikaaf will be made if the I'tikaaf was not observed on its specific days or if it was rendered void while observing it.

(3) Masnoon I'tikaaf (i.e. the I'tikaaf of the last ten days of Ramadhan) will be made Qadhaa if it was rendered void after having commenced it. It is necessary to make Qadhaa of only the day or days which were rendered void. When making Qadhaa of the I'tikaaf, Saum (fasting) is obligatory. Qadhaa of the I'tikaaf will be valid only if fasting is also observed on the day/s when the Qadhaa is being made.

SUNNATUL MUAKKADAH I'TIKAAF

I'tikaaf of the last ten days of Ramadhan is the only Masnoon I'tikaaf. This Masnoon I'tikaaf is Sunnatul Muakkadah alal Kifayah. If a few or even just one person observes this I'tikaaf in a particular area/neighbourhood, the duty will be discharged on behalf of the entire community of that locality. On the other hand, if no one observes this I'tikaaf, the whole community will be guilty of neglecting a Sunnatul Muakkadah obligation. Such neglect is sinful.

(1) The Mu'takif (the one who observes I'tikaaf) will enter the Musjid before sunset of the 20th day of Ramadhan.

(2) The Mu'takif will remain in the Musjid until the sighting of the Eid Hilaal is confirmed.

(3) Niyyat (making intention) is a necessary condition for Masnoon I'tikaaf as well.

(4) If the Masnoon I'tikaaf is broken or nullified, Qadhaa of it is obligatory.

THE VENUE FOR I'TIKAAF

(1) For men, I'tikaaf is valid in only a Musjid in which Athaan and Iqamah are proclaimed for the five daily Salaat. In other words, it has to be a Musjid in which the five daily Salaat are performed with Jamaat.

(2) Females can observe I'tikaaf in a place in their homes set aside for Salaat or specially cordoned off for the purpose of I'tikaaf.

(3) It is not permissible for women to come to the Musjid to observe I'tikaaf or to perform Salaat or to listen to lectures.

(4) The Musjid here refers to the Musjid proper and not to the annexures or adjacent buildings erected for the needs of the Musjid or Musallees. The Musjid proper is that section of the building which was intended by the Waaqif to be the Musjid. (Waaqif is the person or organisation who erected the Musjid and demarcated the Musjid boundaries.)

(5) Most Musaajid have a section at the back, which in most cases is under the same roof, but is excluded from the Musjid proper. Janaazah Salaat and sometimes a second Jamaat by late-comers are performed in this section. Since this section of the building is excluded from the Musjid proper, it is not permissible for the Mu'takif to venture unnecessarily into that area. If he does, his I'tikaaf will be rendered void.

(6) The Mu'takif should ascertain from the Mutawallis (trustees) the exact boundaries of the Musjid.

(7) The wudhu khaanah, courtyard, storerooms and any other adjacent buildings are all excluded from the Musjid.

(8) It is essential that the Mu'takif remains inside the Musjid, or inside the special place set aside at home (for women) throughout the duration of the I'tikaaf. Leaving the place of I'tikaaf unnecessarily for even a minute will render the I'tikaaf null and void.

VALID REASONS FOR LEAVING THE MUSJID AND WHICH WILL NOT BREAK THE I'TIKAAF

It is permissible to leave the Musjid for the following acts of need:

(1) To answer the call of nature – to go to the toilet.

(2) To pass wind.

(3) To take an obligatory bath.

(4) To make wudhu.

(5) Jumuah Salaat – if Jumuah Salaat is not performed in the Musjid where the I'tikaaf is being observed. In this case, the Mu'takif should leave the Musjid at such a time to enable him to reach the other Musjid in time to perform his Sunnat Salaat. He should leave immediately after having completed the six raka'ts Sunnats after the Fardh Salaat. He should not delay for Dua and Thikr.

(6) To proclaim the Athaan if he is the Muath-thin. This is permissible for even a Mu'takif who is not the permanent Muath-thin.

(7) To bring food if there is no one to tend to this need of his.

(8) If one is compelled to leave the Musjid either because of danger or forceful eviction, one may immediately proceed to another Musjid to continue with the I'tikaaf. An unnecessary delay in the process of changing Musjids is not permissible and will break the I'tikaaf.

When leaving the Musjid for the above-mentioned reasons, the Mu'takif must return to the Musjid immediately after having fulfilled the need. An unnecessary delay of even a minute will break the I'tikaaf.

THE MUFSIDAAT OR THE THINGS WHICH INVALIDATE (BREAK) THE I'TIKAAF

Only Waajib and Masnoon I'tikaaf are rendered invalid. Nafil I'tikaaf is not rendered void by any act. It is merely ended by engaging in an act which is not permitted for the Mu'takif.

Unnecessarily leaving the Musjid for even a minute whether intentionally, unintentionally or under compulsion, will invalidate the I'tikaaf. All acts and reasons besides the valid reasons (see page 49) will be regarded as 'unnecessary' in the

context of I'tikaaf. Thus, leaving the Musjid due to illness, although permissible, will invalidate the I'tikaaf.

To leave the Musjid for Janaazah Salaat, visiting the sick or for any other permissible activity besides the valid reasons, will render the I'tikaaf null and void.

The I'tikaaf will also become void (break – be invalid) if the Mu'takif's fast breaks.

THE MUBAAHAAT OR THE THINGS WHICH ARE PERMISSIBLE DURING I'TIKAAF

During I'tikaaf, the following acts are mubah (permissible):

- (1) To eat and drink.
- (2) To sleep.
- (3) Necessary conversation.
- (4) To change clothes and apply perfume and oil.
- (5) To cut hair and nails. These should not be allowed to fall in the Musjid.
- (6) To walk inside the Musjid.
- (7) To sit anywhere inside the Musjid.

- (8) To tend to a sick person inside the Musjid.
- (9) If necessary, to buy and sell goods provided that the goods are not brought into the Musjid nor is payment made inside the Musjid.
- (10) To sew clothing.
- (11) To study Deeni books.
- (12) To get married and to perform a Nikah.
- (13) All such acts which are lawful and allowed in the Musjid are permissible for the Mu'takif.

THE MAKRUHAAT OR THE THINGS WHICH ARE DETESTABLE AND NOT PERMISSIBLE FOR THE MU'TAKIF

The Makruhaat during I'tikaaf are as follows:

- (1) To maintain total silence.
- (2) To indulge in idle talk.
- (3) To sleep excessively merely to waste away the time.
- (4) To unnecessarily pass wind inside the Musjid.
- (5) To sew garments or engage in any occupation for a fee.

- (6) To read books and magazines which are not of a Deeni nature.
- (7) To erect the mu'takaf in a way that inconveniences the Musallees. (Mu'takaf is the area which is enclosed for the sleeping and eating of the one who observes I'tikaaf.)
- (8) To engage in any worldly activity unnecessarily.

WHAT TO DO DURING I'TIKAAF

The Mu'takif should engage himself in Ibaadat to the best of his ability. Nafil Salaat, Tilaawat, Durood, Istighfaar and permanent Thikr in general should be the Mu'takif's occupations throughout the duration of his I'tikaaf. When the Mu'takif speaks, he must speak only what is of virtue or what is necessary.

The Mu'takif should not do anything which conflicts with the spirit of I'tikaaf. He should guard his heart, mind, ears, eyes and limbs against all evil, thus deriving maximum benefit from his seclusion in the Musjid. The Mu'takif is the guest of Allah. He should, therefore, be careful of his behaviour in the House of Allah.

MASAA-IL (RULES) PERTAINING TO I'TIKAAF

- (1) The same rules which apply to a man observing I'tikaaf in the Musjid, apply to a woman observing I'tikaaf in her place of seclusion at home.

(2) When necessity, e.g. Jum'ah Salaat in another Musjid, compels the Mu'takif to leave his Musjid, it will be permissible for him to enquire about a sick person or generally engage in good conversation without departing from the road. He must not unnecessarily stop on the road.

(3) During I'tikaaf it is not permissible to leave the Musjid for even a Sunnat ghusl.

(4) It is permissible for the Mu'ath-thin who is in I'tikaaf to enter the minaret for the Athaan.

(5) Whilst standing inside the Musjid it is permissible for the Mu'takif to protrude his head out of the window.

(6) Emission of semen, e.g. in a wet dream does not invalidate the I'tikaaf.

(7) A woman's I'tikaaf is proper if she has the consent of her husband.

(8) The I'tikaaf of a child who understands the meaning of I'tikaaf, is valid. Bulooq (puberty) is not a condition for the validity of I'tikaaf.

(9) It is permissible to sleep on a bed in the Mu'takaf (the place cordoned off for sleeping and eating).

(10) A person who is not in I'tikaaf should not join the Mu'takif for Iftaar or eating unless he also makes a niyyat for I'tikaaf. Such an I'tikaaf will be Nafl and its duration can be even for a minute. The person should make niyyat of I'tikaaf, then engage

in some Thikr and Salaat. Thereafter, he may do as he pleases, e.g. join the Mu'takif in eating.

(11) The Mu'takif should remain at all times with wudhu. If his wudhu breaks, it will be permissible for him to leave the Musjid for the purpose of wudhu, even if it is not yet time for Salaat. After making wudhu, he should perform at least two raka'ts Tahiyyatul wudhu. Similarly, it will be permissible for him to leave the Musjid to make wudhu at night to enable him to sleep with wudhu.

(12) If for some reason the I'tikaaf of Ramadhaan was rendered void (broken), it will not be necessary to leave the Musjid. The remaining days may still be observed and Qadhaa of the day/s rendered void should be made.

THE THREE CLASSES OF FASTING

In his Kitaab, Tableeghud Deen, Imaam Ghazaali (Rahmatullah alayh) says:

Fasting, with regard to quality, are of three kinds:

(1) The Saum of the Awaam (general public – the masses). Their fast consists of only abstention from the physical acts which nullify the fast. While they abstain from eating, etc., they involve their bodies in sin. Such Saum is merely fasting in name. (Only the Fardh obligation is discharged thereby.)

(2) In addition to abstaining from food, etc., the Saa-im (fasting person) restrains the body from acting in violation of the Shariah. He withholds his tongue from gheebat and eyes from casting gazes at ghair mahaareem. This is the middle category of fasting.

(3) The third category of fasting is the Saum of the elite servants of Allah Ta'ala, viz. The Muttaqeen. In addition to their limbs abstaining from transgression, their hearts and minds are perpetually engrossed in Thikrullah. At all times, in their hearts there is nothing but the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. This is fasting in the state of kamaal (perfection).

GENERAL Q & A

Q. Is it a Sunnat to fast on 27th Rajab?

A. Fasting on 27th Rajab is not Sunnat.

Q. I have read that according to Shaikh Uthaymeen, it is not permissible to keep Nafl fast on Fridays and Saturdays.

A. Shaikh Ibn Uthaymeen was a Salafi. His ruling is incorrect. It is permissible to fast Nafl on Fridays and Saturdays.

Q. Some Ulama are saying that there is no significance for fasting on the 15th Day of Sha'baan nor is the 15th Night of Sha'baan a Night of special significance. They say that the Ahaadith in this regard are fabrications. Please comment.

A. The 15th Night of Sha'baan is a night of significance and so is the 15th day. Fasting on that day is Sunnah. The claim of fabrication is baseless. The significance of Sha'baan, i.e. the 15th Night and Day, has been the view and practice of all our Akaabireen since time immemorial. Deviates are at pains to create confusion with their concocted views.

Q. I have been told that it is Sunnat to fast two days in Sha'baan, the 14th and 15th. Is this correct?

A. It is Sunnat to fast only one day, the 15th of Sha'baan. However, fasting on 13th, 14th and 15th of every Islamic month is Sunnat. It is therefore permissible to fast on 13th, 14th and 15th Sha'baan. But it is not a Sunnat specific with Sha'baan. The specific Sunnat of Sha'baan is to fast on the 15th.

Q. Fasting on the Day of Arafaat is Sunnat. What if the Day of Arafaat is one day earlier than the date in our country?

A. We follow our local dates which are determined by our local sighting of the moon. We have to fast on 9th Zil-Hajj, that is, when it is the 9th in our country, not the 9th in Saudi Arabia.

Q. From which day in Shawwaal do the six days of Nafl fasting commence?

A. The six days of Nafl Fasting could be kept on any days during the month starting from the 2nd of Shawwaal, i.e. the day after Eidul Fitr.

Q. Is the roza (fast) of 15 Sha'baan Sunnat?

A. The Roza of 15th Sha'baan is Sunnat. Some people of late have initiated a baseless controversy on this issue.

Q. A Moulana says that it is Makrooh to keep the six fasts of Shawwaal.

A. It is the practice of all the Akaabireen to keep the six fasts of Shawwaal. It is Sunnat to keep the six fasts of the Month of Shawwaal.

Q. What is the Masnoon fasting during the month of Muharram?

A. Aashura is the 10th of Muharram. It is Sunnah to fast on either the 10th and 11th Muharram or on the 9th and 10th Muharram.

Q. A Moulana claims that it is Makrooh to fast six days during the month of Shawwaal. He claims that according to Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) it is Makrooh. Is it Makrooh or Sunnat to fast six days during the month of Shawwaal?

A. The Maulana talks drivel. Fasting six days during the month of Shawwaal is Sunnat. It is a practice observed from the age of

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Whilst the juhhaal (ignoramus) baselessly claim that the Hadith on which the validity of this practice is based is a fabrication, the Hadith is authentic. Imaam Ahmad Bin Hambal (Rahmatullah alayh) said that this Hadith is narrated via three authentic Chains of Transmission from the Sahaabah Abu Ayyub Ansaari, Thaubaan and Jabir Bin Abdullah (Radhiyallahu anhum). Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever fasts the month of Ramadhan and follows it up with six days of Shawwaal, is as if he has fasted a whole year.”

This Hadith is recorded in Saheeh Muslim, Tirmizi, Nisaai, Abu Dawood and Musnad-e-Ahmad. Thus, the claim of it being Maudhoo’ (fabricated) is palpably baatil (false).

The Makrooh view attributed to Imaam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alayh) was predicated with prevalent circumstances. In his era, the practice was assigned a higher level. It was elevated to the level of WujooB (being compulsory). It is a well-known principle of the Shariah that when even a Sunnah practice is elevated to the degree of WujooB, it will be labelled bid’ah and prohibited until such time that the belief of the masses has been rectified.

When Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) mentioned the virtues of fasting six days during Shawwaal and encouraged its observance, it was just natural for the Sahaabah to embrace the practice with great enthusiasm. They steadfastly observed this practice of fasting six days in Shawwaal. Their steadfast and enthusiastic observance of this practice resulted in the belief during the Taabieen age that fasting the six days of Shawwaal was akin to Ramadhan. Commenting on the elevation to

Wujoob of this practice, Allaamah Ibn Hummaam of the 9th Islamic century, states in Fathul Qadeer:

“The reason for the Makrooh view is that among the masses the belief of incumbency gained ascendancy. Thus, we have heard some saying on the Day of Fitr (Eid): ‘For us it is not yet Eid.’, or similar such statements. However, in the absence of this (type of idea), there is nothing wrong fasting the six days because of the Hadith (encouraging its observance).”

In Al-Muheetul Burhaani is mentioned:

“The Makrooh view is based on the fear that it (the six days) would become enumerated with Ramadhaan.... However, today, that idea does not exist. It is therefore not Makrooh.”

Al-Qustalaani states in Mawaahibur Rahmaan:

“According to our Ulama and Imaam Shaafi’ it is not Makrooh to follow Eidul Fitr with six fasts of Shawwaal, for the Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) says: ‘Whoever fasts Ramadhaan and follows it up with six days of Shawwaal, is as if he has fasted a whole year.’ ”

There is consensus of the Fuqaha that fasting six days in Shawwaal is Sunnat. It is a practice which has existed in the Ummah since the age of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The rare view of Karaahat (it being Makrooh) has to be incumbently set aside or appropriately interpreted to reconcile it with the well-substantiated practice – substantiated by the consensus of the Ummah. A rare view may not be cited to abrogate an established practice of the Shariah.

The Makrooh view is also attributed to Imaam Maalik (Rahmatullah alayh). It is quite clear that the Hadith on this subject did not reach Imaam Maalik. There is no Sahaabi, no Imaam and no Muhaddith who had claimed or who could claim to have encompassed all the hundreds of thousands of Ahaadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). It is precisely for this reason that the Aimmah Mujtahideen had instructed their Students who were Mujtahids and Fuqaha of the highest calibre, to set aside their views should they come across a Saheeh Hadith stating another view.

In our time, the idea of the six Shawwaal fasts being considered to be part of Ramadhaan or being Waajib is furthest from the mind. Leave alone believing these fasts to be part of Ramadhaan, most Muslims are unaware of this Sunnat practice, and most of those who are even aware, do not observe this practice. Thus, the original Sunnat practice remains intact, and the baseless view of Makrooh propagated by the juhhaal of our time is rejected.

Q. When exactly should a person stop eating for the fast? The Athaan goes at different times in the various Musjids.

A. The fast begins when Subh Saadiq commences. You should not follow the Athaan nor the times when Fajr Salaat begins in the various Musjids. You should ascertain from someone what the time of Subh Saadiq is. We do not know this time at your end. If Athaan is called before ending of Suhoor/Sehri time, then it is still permissible to eat.

Q. According to a fatwa of Shaikh Uthaymeen of Saudi Arabia it is bid'ah to stop eating 10 or 15 minutes before expiry of Suhoor time. The time for eating is right until Subh Saadiq. Please comment.

A. It is permissible to eat right until a second before expiry of Sehri/Suhoor time. However, since in most places the exact time is not known because Subh Saadiq is not physically determined by sighting the natural phenomena, stopping eating a few minutes before what is thought to be Subh Saadiq is a precautionary measure. Undoubtedly, it will be haraam and bid'ah to believe that it is not permissible to eat right until just before entry of Subh Saadiq. To the best of our knowledge, no one holds such a belief.

The cessation of eating is only precautionary. The Shaikh could not have meant that it is bid'ah to abstain from eating 15 minutes before Subh Saadiq. Perhaps he understood that people believe that it is Waajib to stop eating 15 minutes before Subh Saadiq and not permissible to eat thereafter.

Q. I have heard that there is a view that the fast begins at sunrise. Is this a valid view?

A. It is a corrupt view. The view that the fast begins at sunrise is utterly baseless. Those who adhere to this view are ignorant. No Math-hab teaches this view.

Q. When is it Iftaar time? Does Iftaar begin with the Maghrib Athaan?

A. Iftaar is the very moment the sun has set. When the upper circumference of the sun has disappeared from the horizon, then it is Iftaar time. Iftaar is not dependent on the Athaan.

Q. A Shaikh in Dubai has issued a fatwa to the effect that those high up in skyscrapers have to make Iftaar a couple of minutes later than those on the lower floors. The skyscraper in Dubai is 828 metres high with 160 stories. People in this

building, according to Shaikh Ahmad Haddad's fatwa, have to break the fast at three different times.

Those living on the lower floors – 80 and below – have to break fast at the same time as all others when the Athaan for Maghrib is recited. Those from 80 floors to 150, have to make Iftaar two minutes after the Athaan on the ground. Those above 150 floors have to break fast three minutes later. The same applies to their Maghrib Salaat. Is this correct? If those on the top stories perform Maghrib Salaat when they hear the Athaan in the Musaa'jid, will their Salaat be valid?

A. The fatwa is correct. Maghrib and Iftaar are valid only when the sun has disappeared from sight. Those on the upper floors are still able to see the sun which has set for those at the bottom, hence they have to make Iftaar after the sun has disappeared from their sight. If they break the fast together with those at the bottom whilst they are still able to see the sun, then their fast will not be valid. Similarly, their Maghrib Salaat will not be valid if they follow those on the ground.

Q. At the Musjid where I attend (in New York), feasting takes place at the time of Iftaar. A full meal is eaten. So much food is brought to the Musjid that about 20 plates of food is thrown into the garbage almost daily. A non-Muslim neighbour has asked me for some of the food. Is it permissible for me to give him the food without the permission?

A. You don't need the permission of vile gluttons who eat like animals and waste like devils. They are brothers of the shayaateen according to the Qur'aan Majeed. If the people of the Musjid are committing the heinous and major sin of throwing so much food in the garbage, then you may give the

food to the non-Muslim neighbour. May Allah Ta'ala guide those who are displaying so much satanic ingratitude to Allah Ta'ala for the bounty of food. It is haraam to devour so gluttonously at the time of Iftaar as you have described. The Sunnah way is to break the fast with a couple of dates or water, then to immediately begin Maghrib Salaat.

Q. Is it permissible for us to break fast when the Muath-thin breaks his fast, or do we have to wait until the commencement of the Athaan?

A. Breaking the fast is not dependent on the Athaan. As soon as the sun has set, the fast may be broken. When the Muath-thin breaks his fast before the Athaan, one may break one's fast also.

Q. The Muath-thin at the Masjid recites the Dua of Iftaar over the microphone. Is this proper?

A. It is bid'ah for the Muath-thin to recite the dua over the microphone.

Q. I am confused regarding the Kaffaarah of 60 days for intentionally breaking a fast during Ramadhan. In one issue of The Majlis it is mentioned that if a Ramadhan Qadha fast is intentionally broken, there is no Kaffaarah while in another issue the 60 day Kaffaarah is mentioned. Please explain the conflict.

A. There is no conflict. You have confused Ramadhan Qadha with fasts which are kept during the month of Ramadhan. If a person makes niyyat (intention) during the night time (i.e. before Subh Saadiq/Fajr time) to fast the next day of Ramadhan, and he breaks this fast without valid reason, he is liable for the 60 day Kaffaarah penalty. This penalty applies if the fast is broken during the month of Ramadhan. However, if

one had not fasted for some reason during Ramadhan, then one has to make Qadha of the missed fast. This Qadha will obviously be made after Ramadhan. If a person begins the day making Qadha of his fast, and then breaks this Qadha fast intentionally without valid reason, the 60 day penalty does not apply to this Qadha fast. He still has to make only one Qadha fast. The penalty applies only when breaking intentionally a fast during the month of Ramadhan.

Q. I broke two rozas without valid reason. Do I have to fast 120 days to compensate for this sin? If yes, should the 120 days be kept altogether or could I keep 60 days, then after some time begin the second 60 days?

A. Only one 60 day Kaffarah applies to the fasts nullified in one Ramadhan. You don't have to fast 120 days. You have to fast 62 days: 2 days are Qadha and 60 days is the penalty. Two 60 day Kaffarah would apply if the fasts were broken in different Ramadhans.

Q. The wife was not fasting. The husband who was fasting indulged in sexual relations with his wife. Does the 60 day Kaffarah apply to both?

A. The husband has to keep sixty consecutive days of fasting as the Kaffarah for destroying his fast of Ramadhan. While there is no Kaffarah on the wife since she was not fasting, she still has to make Qadha. She is also guilty of a very serious sin for having submitted to her husband's evil/haraam desire. She is instrumental for this difficult Kaffarah which her husband has now to observe.

Q. A person intentionally broke fasts during several Ramadhans. Will one Kaffarah of 60 days and the number of Qadha fasts suffice to expiate him?

A. One Kaffaarah suffices for any number of days of fasts destroyed during one Ramadhaan. If for example, three fasts were intentionally broken in one Ramadhaan, then one Kaffaarah plus three Qadha will suffice. If fasts were nullified in four Ramadhaans, for example, then four Kaffaarahs have to be offered. The Kaffaarah penalty will apply if niyyat was made to fast the next day. If there was no niyyat, then only Qadha is applicable.

Q. Please explain the rules regarding the 60 day Kaffaarah fast for having broken a fast without valid reason. I live in the U.S.A. If I send my Kaffaarah contribution to another country, what value should be considered?

A. (1) Qadha has to be made for each fast of Ramadhaan which is missed. For one fast missed, one Qadha has to be kept, not 60 days.

(2) If one breaks a Ramadhaan fast without valid reason, then the Kaffaarah penalty applies. 60 consecutive days have to be fasted for breaking one or more fasts during a single Ramadhaan without valid reason. If one had broken even a few fasts in this manner during one Ramadhaan, only one 60 day Kaffaarah applies plus the number of days broken. If the fasts were broken in two Ramadhaans, then two 60 day penalties will apply. This does not mean 120 consecutive days. After completion of the one 60 day Kaffaarah, the next one may be initiated at any other time.

(3) If one's health or old age simply does not allow one to keep the sixty day Kaffaarah, then sixty poor Muslims should be given the Sadqah Fitr amount. For each one this amount should be given. It may be given to only one faqeer, but not on one or a couple days. It should be given to him over sixty days. Every

day one Sadqah Fitr amount should be given to him. The Sadqah amount is the price of 2 kilograms of flour. Or the full amount may be given on one day to sixty fuqara, each one to be given the Sadqah Fitr amount.

(4) Whatever the price of 2 kilograms of flour is in the U.S., use it to calculate your Kaffaarah. But remember that monetary Kaffaarah is valid only if you are unable to fast.

Q. If masturbation is practised during fasting, is the fast broken? What compensation has to be paid?

A. Masturbating nullifies the fasting, and besides the destruction it inflicts on the fast, it brings great spiritual havoc in its wake. Masturbation by itself is a heinous sin. To practise it while fasting is sin aggravated. Like Thawaab for virtue practised in Ramadhaan is multiplied manifold, so is the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala and His Punishment multiplied manifold for the perpetrators of sin during fasting. There is no compensation which could be offered to rectify this heinous wrong committed during Ramadhaan in so far as the Thawaab of fasting is concerned. Qadha of the fast has to be made to discharge the obligation, but such Qadha will not redeem the Thawaab of fast annihilated by the evil act of masturbation. The perpetrators of this evil have only one hope, i.e. the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala. They should make Taubah and seek Allah Ta'ala's forgiveness. Regret and sincere repentance will, Insha'Allah, obliterate the sin. Allah Ta'ala says in the Holy Qur'aan: *"And despair not of the Mercy of Allah. Verily, He forgives all sins"*.

Q. Does an internal medical examination break the fast of a woman?

A. Yes, it breaks her fast.

Q. If while fasting water slips down the throat when making wudhu, will the fast be valid?

A. If while fasting the water slips into the throat, the fast breaks. Qadha will be necessary. It will also be incumbent to remain like a fasting person the whole day. The accidental breaking of the fast does not permit eating and drinking.

Q. Is smoking haraam during Ramadhan?

A. Smoking is haraam at all times, not only in Ramadhan. Smoking furthermore breaks the fast.

Q. Many boys attending secular school smoke during Ramadhan. They claim that as long as they don't eat and drink, their fast is valid. Does smoking break the fast?

A. Smoking is haraam even while not fasting. It is an aggravated haraam while fasting. It breaks the fast. These boys are stupid and evil. They are the effects of the current drug and zina culture which is among the shiaar (salient, outstanding, distinguishing features) of secular educational institutions. If these ignoramuses had started off the fast of Ramadhan with a niyyat during the night time, that is, before Subh Saadiq, the Kaffarah penalty of 60 days consecutive fasting, applies when the fast is broken intentionally whether with smoking or eating.

Q. I continued eating while the Athaan for Fajr was being recited, but stopped a few seconds after commencement of the Athaan. Is my fast valid?

A. Your fast is not valid. You have to make Qadha of one fast.

Q. If a husband and wife who are in need of a Waajib ghusl wake up late and there remains just a few minutes for the ending of Sehri time, what should they do? If they bath,

they will miss Sehri. Is it permissible to delay the ghusl? Will the fast be compulsory on them?

A. Yes, the husband and wife can take ghusl afterwards. If the time for Suhoor is very little, they should rinse their mouths, and partake of Sehri. Even if they wake up after Fajr Athaan, then too it remains compulsory to fast. They should take ghusl and they have to fast.

Q. Do ear drops break the fast?

A. Ear drops break the fast.

Q. If a bit of blood from a tooth mingled with saliva goes down the throat, will the fast break?

A. If the taste of the blood is perceived in the throat, the fast breaks even if the saliva is greater in quantity.

Q. Does pouring oil into the ears break the fast?

A. Yes, it breaks the fast.

Q. The prison here in the U.S.A. serves our Suhoor meal precisely at the time when Fajr time has commenced. What should we do under such circumstances? Is our fast valid? Do we have to make Qadha?

A. In the circumstances you find yourself, eat the food and spend the day as if you are fasting. Whenever you find the opportunity, you should make Qadha of the invalid fasts. Obviously you will find this opportunity only after your release. The fast will not be valid when eating at Fajr time. But since you have no option in prison, you will not be sinful. Nevertheless, recite Istighfaar, seek forgiveness and make dua for release. But after release you must fulfil these fasts.

Q. If one takes a Waajib ghusl after expiry of Sehri time, will the fast be valid?

A. While a Waajib ghusl should not be unnecessarily delayed, it is nevertheless permissible to take the Fardh ghusl even after expiry of Sehri time. The fast will be valid.

Q. A man fainted during the daytime while he was fasting. He recovered after Iftaar time. Is his fast valid?

A. If food, water or medicine was not administered to him while he was unconscious, his fast is valid.

Q. If one vomits a mouthful or more, does the fast break?

A. The fast does not break even if the vomit is more than one mouthful as long as the vomiting is not induced.

Q. A person mistakenly eats during Ramadhaan. Then, thinking that his fast is broken, intentionally eats. What is the ruling?

A. In this case only Qadha is incumbent. Kaffaarah is not Waajib. However, if despite him being aware of the mas'alah, he intentionally eats, then Kaffaarah will also be compulsory. But if he is genuinely not aware of this mas'alah, then only Qadha is Waajib.

Q. If a compulsory ghusl was not taken before ending of Sehri, will the fast be valid?

A. Ghusl should be made as soon as possible. However, even if it was not made immediately, and was delayed until after ending of Sehri time, the fast will be valid. Whilst ghusl should be taken as soon as possible, it will not invalidate the fast if ghusl had not yet been made.

Q. Is it permissible for a woman to remove facial hair whilst fasting?

A. It is permissible to remove facial hair even during the fast.

Q. Is it permissible to clip nails during the fast?

A. Nails may be clipped while fasting.

Q. Whilst fasting, I swallowed some vomit which had entered my mouth. Do I have to make Qadha?

A. If the vomit slipped down unintentionally, the fast does not break.

Q. Is it permissible to remove pubic hairs and cut nails whilst fasting?

A. It is permissible.

Q. Can we use eye drops while fasting?

A. It is permissible to use eye-drops whilst fasting.

Q. Is it permissible to rinse the mouth during the fast when making wudhu?

A. Yes, it is permissible to rinse the mouth whilst fasting. However, do not gargle.

Q. During Ramadhaan while I was sitting on a bench in the park, a hobo sitting on another bench was smoking weed (dagga). The smoke drifted towards me. Although I immediately got up and left, I inhaled some of the smoke. Was my fast valid?

A. Your fast is valid. The fast will not break if inhaling of the smoke is not intentional. In the case mentioned by you, the fast remains valid.

Q. When a woman wears no scarf and wears a mini-skirt, and at the same time keeps Roza, is her Roza accepted?

A. Her fast (Roza) is valid, but her acts of not donning the Islamic head-cover and wearing a mini-skirt are abominable and haraam. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has cursed women who reveal any part of their bodies and he (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has described such women as adulteresses. Although the obligation of the Roza is discharged, the Thawaab of fasting is destroyed by the commission of unlawful acts. A woman has to clad herself Islamically at all times whether she is fasting or not.

Q. Most school-going children who fast indulge in major sins. They argue that these actions do not break the fast, hence they freely commit the sins. Please comment on this attitude.

A. Obviously the fast of the evil person who indulges in all the kabeerah sins you have mentioned will not be accepted. Such a fast is rejected – struck into his face. Every semblance of Thawaab is destroyed by the haraam acts you have mentioned. Their fasting is like a chained dog is denied food and water from morning till night. The effect of the fast is utterly destroyed and they qualify for Jahannam. About such damaged fasts, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *“There are many persons for whom there is nothing in their fasting but hunger”*. If they believe that the sins are permissible, then they lose their Imaan. In fact, innumerable pupils of secular schools and even adults while believing they are Muslims, have long ago become murtads with their beliefs of kufr.

Q. Does speaking a lie or looking at a ghair mahram with lust nullify the fast?

A. Whilst speaking a lie and looking with lust do not physically break the fast, these sins do destroy the reward and the spiritual effects of the fast, and the sin is multiplied manifold for committing such flagrant transgression whilst fasting.

Q. I am a follower of the Shaafi Math-hab. I was told that it is not permissible to use perfume whilst fasting. Does it break the fast?

A. According to the Shaafi Math-hab, while perfume does not break the Saum, it is Makrooh to apply it whilst fasting. It is not permissible.

Q. Must a Nafil fast which was broken be kept again?

A. If niyyat (intention) for the Nafil fast was made during or after Subh Saadiq (i.e. approximately 1 hour 30 minutes before sunrise Subh Saadiq commences) then Qadha will have to be kept for the fast broken. However, if niyyat was made during the night, but before entry of Subh Saadiq, one decided not to keep the fast, then no Qadha is necessary. Hence, Qadha will have to be kept for a Nafil fast broken.

Q. During my youth I had missed many fasts almost every year. I do not remember the number. How should I make Qadha of such fasts?

A. You have to reflect – think deeply and fix a number of fasts which had been broken in the past, then begin making Qadha. After reflecting, whatever number your heart tells you, accept it as such and commence making Qadha.

Q. When a woman misses Roza (fasts) on account of pregnancy or breastfeeding, can she compensate by paying the Fidyah?

A. The woman who had missed her Rozas due to pregnancy or breastfeeding has to make Qadha of the fasts. Paying Fidyah will not compensate.

Q. When Qadha fasts of Ramadhaan are made, should Taraaweesh also be performed?

A. Qadha of Taraaweesh is not made. When making Qadha of missed fasts, there is no Qadha of Taraaweesh Salaat with it.

Q. A man was in a coma for 20 days during the month of Ramadhaan. Does he have to make Qadha of the days he did not fast or will payment of Fidyah suffice?

A. He has to make Qadha of the days he was in the coma. Fidyah will not be valid if he is able to fast.

Q. I have a number of last year's Ramadhaan fasts to make Qadha. Is it compulsory to keep these fasts consecutively?

A. Qadha fasts (fasts which you had missed last year or any other year) may be discharged over a period. It is not incumbent to fast consecutively. It could be spread over a couple of weeks or months.

Q. Is it permissible to fast on the holy days (9th Zil Hajj and 10th Muharram) with the intention of Qadha of Ramadhaan?

A. It is permissible to fast on the auspicious days with the intention of making Qadha of Ramadhaan's fasts.

Q. If I keep my Ramadhaan Qadha fasts in Shawwaal, will I also receive the reward of the six Nafl fasts of Shawwaal?

A. If the niyyat is Qadha, the Thawaab of the Masnoon fast will not be received.

Q. A Shaafi has not made Qadha of some of his Ramadhan fasts which he had missed three years ago. What is the ruling of the Shaafi Math-hab?

A. Shaafis who delay their Qadha fasting have to pay a penalty (Fidyah) for each fast. The Fidyah is the Sadqah Fitr amount. For each fast, in addition to making Qadha, the Fidyah should be paid. Delay in this context means that the Qadha was not made by the time the next Ramadhan arrived.

Q. I committed a heinous sin. I ruined two days of Ramadhan by breaking the fast with sexual relations. What is the penalty for this sin?

A. Taubah – sincere repentance, and keeping 60 days consecutive fasting. In addition to the 60 days Kaffarah, two days of Qadha have to be observed. The 60 days must be one after the other without missing even one day.

Q. How many days of fasting are necessary for having broken an oath?

A. When a Qasam (oath) is violated, Kaffarah is to feed ten Masaakeen (poor Muslims) or to give them the equivalent in the form of cash. The amount to be given to a Miskeen (poor Muslim) is the same as the Sadqah Fitr which today is about R15.

If you are going to pay the Kaffarah yourself, then don't give the whole amount to one or two poor persons if it is paid on the same day. You have to give it to ten different Masaakeen if the whole amount is paid at once.

Q. What is the Fidyah amount for a person who is unable to fast?

A. The Fidyah amount is the same as Sadqatul Fitr, i.e. the price of about 2kg flour. Whatever the price of the flour is at your end will be the Fidyah amount.

Q. How much Fidyah is it for Namaaz and Ramadhaan fasts? What is the correct word: Fidyah or Kaffaarah?

A. For Qadha Namaaz and Qadha Roza, the term Fidyah is used. If it is a 60 day penalty Roza, then the term Kaffaarah will be used. If it is the penalty for a violated oath, it will be Kaffaarah. The Fidyah for a Qadha Namaaz is the same amount as the Fitr amount which is the price of 2kg flour. Fidyah applies to the Witr Namaaz as well.

Q. A woman due to sickness missed 15 days fasting of Ramadhaan. How much should she pay to compensate for the missed fasts?

A. Paying Fidyah for missed fasts is valid only when one has lost all hope of recovering from the sickness. If a person recovers sufficient health to fast, then paying Fidyah is not permissible. Qadha must be made. However, if a person has lost all hope in being cured, then the Fidyah for one day is the same as the Sadqatul Fitr which is the price of 2 kilograms of flour.

Q. A man while making Qadha of a fast which he had missed in Ramadhaan, made a wasiyyat that if he dies, the Fidyah of the fast should be paid. Before the fast ended, he died. Is it Waajib to pay the Fidyah?

A. If before keeping the Qadha fast, the person did have an opportunity of fulfilling the Qadha, but had not done so, then in the case mentioned by you, the Fidyah must be paid. Only if the person did not gain an opportunity to keep the Qadha, will Fidyah not be Waajib.

For example, a person due to severe illness was unable to keep a fast in Ramadhaan. His sickness continued for a few days after Ramadhaan. There was not a single day without the severe illness, hence he was not able to keep the Qadha. He died during this sickness. In this case the Qadha is waived, and Fidyah is not Waajib. However, after the sickness, he recovered for a day or two and had sufficient health/strength to keep the Qadha, but he did not. In this case Fidyah is Waajib. Thus, if this person after making wasiyyat, fasts and dies during the fast, then it is Waajib to pay the Fidyah as he had made.

Q. A relative who has died could not fast due to severe illness nor did he make a wasiyyat for Fidyah to be paid for the missed fasts. He died during this illness. Can we pay the Fidyah for him?

A. If the deceased person had not recovered from the sickness to enable him/her to make Qadha of the missed fasts, then Fidyah is not incumbent. The obligation is waived. However, if the sick person had recovered and was able to execute the Qadha, but had not done so, then Fidyah is imperative.

Q. If the heirs are aware that their deceased parent is liable for many Qadha Salaat and Fasts, is it obligatory for them to pay Fidyah or Kaffaarah?

A. If the mayyit (deceased) had made a wasiyyat (bequest/directive) that Fidyah, Kaffaarah, etc. should be paid on his/her behalf, then it is compulsory to fulfil the wasiyyat and pay the Fidyah, Kaffaarah, etc. from one third of his/her assets. If a wasiyyat was not made, then it is not incumbent on the heirs to pay Fidyah, Kaffaarah, etc. for the deceased. However, if they wish to do so, then each one should give from his/her share and it may not be imposed on any heir. Furthermore, nothing may be taken from the shares of minors.

Q. I am diabetic and unable to fast. What is the compensation for my inability to fast?

A. If you are unable to fast during Ramadhan due to ill-health, then after Ramadhan when you regain your health, you must make Qadha of the missed fasts. If there is no hope of recovering from the sickness and you are truly unable to fast, then Fidyah has to be paid. For each missed fast the amount is the same as the amount of Sadqatul Fitr. This amount should be given to the Muslim poor. However, even after having paid the Fidyah, if your health recovers and you are able to fast, Qadha of the missed fasts has to be made.

Q. Is it necessary for a breastfeeding woman to fast?

A. Yes, it is necessary for even a breastfeeding woman to fast if fasting does not dry up her milk. However, if she is unable to fast because her milk will dry up causing suffering to her baby, then she has to make Qadha of the missed fast.

Q. A person while at home began the fast during the month of Ramadhan. Then he went on a journey and along the journey he broke the fast. What is the penalty for this or was it permissible to break the fast?

A. It was not permissible to have broken the fast without valid reason. He was required to have completed the fast even whilst travelling. Nevertheless, Kaffaarah is not Waajib for having broken the fast on the journey. He has to make Qadha of that day.

Q. Is it necessary for a traveller to abstain from fasting?

A. It is better to fast even when travelling. Only those who are weak, sick and very tired should not fast while travelling. It is not compulsory to abstain from fasting whilst on a journey. It is

meritorious to fast even on a journey. Qadha of such missed fast has to be made.

Q. Is it permissible for a person travelling in comfort to abstain from fasting during Ramadhan?

A. Whilst it is permissible for a traveller to abstain from fasting, if the journey is not arduous, it will be better to fast. If he avails himself of the concession and abstains from fasting, then he has to make Qadha of only the days he misses.

Q. A fasting woman's haidh started 2 minutes before Iftaar, i.e. before sunset. What is the state of her fasting?

A. If haidh started even two minutes before Iftaar time (that is before sunset), the fast is not valid. She has to keep one day Qadha.

Q. A woman's haidh ended during the morning time in the Month of Ramadhan. What should she do regarding fasting?

A. While fasting will not be valid, nevertheless, it is incumbent that she remains like a fasting person. After Ramadhan she has to make Qadha.

Q. What should one do if haidh begins during the course of fasting?

A. If whilst fasting, haidh begins, the fast should be compulsorily broken. But one should not eat in front of people. If you happen to be in the state of haidh and it ends during the day of Ramadhan, then it is compulsory to stop eating and act like a fasting person. However, you will still have to make Qadha of this day. If you are in the state of haidh before the fasting day begins, then you may eat at any time during the day, but not in front of people. You may not fast.

Q. Why is fasting forbidden on the Days of Tashreek?

A. Fasting is forbidden on 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th Zil-Hajj for the simple reason that Allah Ta'ala has prohibited it. There is no other reason.

Q. At night I intended to fast the next day, but I overslept and did not wake up for Sehri. I therefore resolved not to fast. Do I have to make Qadha?

A. As long as you did not commence the Nafl fast, there will be no Qadha even if you had intended to fast. But if after Subh Saadiq you had begun the fast, then broke it, Qadha will be Waajib.

Q. How should one make preparations for the Month of Ramadhan?

A. One should always be prepared for Maut. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the most intelligent person is one who makes preparations for Maut and the sojourn in Barzakh. While Ramadhan comes once a year, Maut stalks us every moment of our life. No one knows when it will strike and snatch us from this dunya. The Mu'min's preparation, whether for Ramadhan or for Maut, is constant Istighfaar, constant Thikrullaah, abstention from sin and futility, following the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), and strict obedience to the Shariah. This should be our preparation at all times, then we shall be prepared for Ramadhan and for any other occasion.

Q. A Muslim youth has signed a contract with a European sports club. He has to play soccer for the club. The daytime hours in Europe currently are very long. The fast is about

20 hours. Is it permissible for him to abstain from fasting and make Qadha?

A. Abstention from the Fardh fasting of Ramadhaan for the satanic, haraam sports is tantamount to kufr. It is never permissible to abstain from fasting for this shaitaani reason. A Muslim who abstains from the Fardh Fasting for the sake of haraam kuffaar sport is a veritable shaitaan.

Q. If a person who started fasting in India a day after South Africa started fast, comes to South Africa during Ramadhaan and when it is Eid here, he has fasted 28 days. What should he do?

A. The person from India who fasted 28 days due to South Africa having been one day late, should make Qadha of one day after Eid.

Q. If a person travels to a country and reaches there when it is the 31st day for him, what should he do? It is still Ramadhaan in this place whilst he has completed 30 days since in his country Ramadhaan had begun a day earlier.

A. He should keep the 31st fast. Ramadhaan and Eid have to be together with the community.

Q. What are the Sunnat acts for the night of 27 Rajab? Is it Sunnat to fast on the 27th?

A. The customs about Rajab are bid'ah. It is haraam to indulge in these customs which have no basis in Islam. There are no Sunnat acts for 27th Rajab, and it is not Sunnat to fast on 27th Rajab.

NECESSARY ADVICE

1. It is Sunnah to break the fast with dates. This was the practice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah. It is unhealthy to break the Saum (Fast) with other kinds of food and to eat much at the time of Iftaar.
2. Maghrib Salaat should commence a few (about 3) minutes after the Athaan. There is therefore ample time to fulfil the Sunnah requirement of Iftaar. Begin Iftaar during the course of the Athaan.
3. Eating at the time of Sehri, ends with the advent of Subh Saadiq which is when Fajr time begins. It is preferable to stop eating a couple of minutes before the 'Fast Begins' time given on this timetable.
4. Eating beyond the 'Fast Begins' time invalidates the fast. Some people continue eating whilst the Fajr Athaan is in progress. The fast is invalid.
5. If by error a Fast is invalidated, then too it is not permissible to eat. Remain as a fasting person, and make Qadha of the invalid fast after Ramadhaan.

6. Whilst nonsensical, futile and abundant conversation does not invalidate the physical Fast, it utterly ruins the spiritual Fast. The spiritual benefits of the Fast are ruined by indulgence in futility, and the position is worse if the talk is gheebat (gossip and backbiting). Gheebat also makes the Fast physically difficult.

7. After Ramadhaan, i.e. during the month of Shawwaal, it is Sunnat to keep six Nafl Fasts. These may be kept all together or spread out over the month.

8. The reward of one good deed practised in Ramadhaan equals 70 such deeds practised in other months. By the same token, the evil of sin committed during Ramadhaan is also multiplied manifold.

9. Tilaawat of the Qur'aan Shareef is of special importance and significance during Ramadhaan. Many khatams (complete recitations) of the Qur'aan Majeed should be observed.

10. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has applied additional emphasis on abstaining from arguments during the month of Ramadhaan. If someone initiates an argument, maintain silence. In such silence is success.

11. At least during Ramadhaan, have mercy on your own soul by abstaining from the evil of television. The entire spiritual effect, benefit and reward of the wonderful Days of Ramadhaan are gushed down the satanic drain by viewing television.